

This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

[redacted]

Z
Bur







[redacted]

34

Burrell

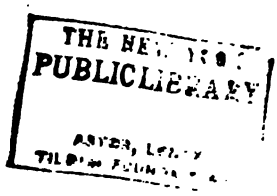


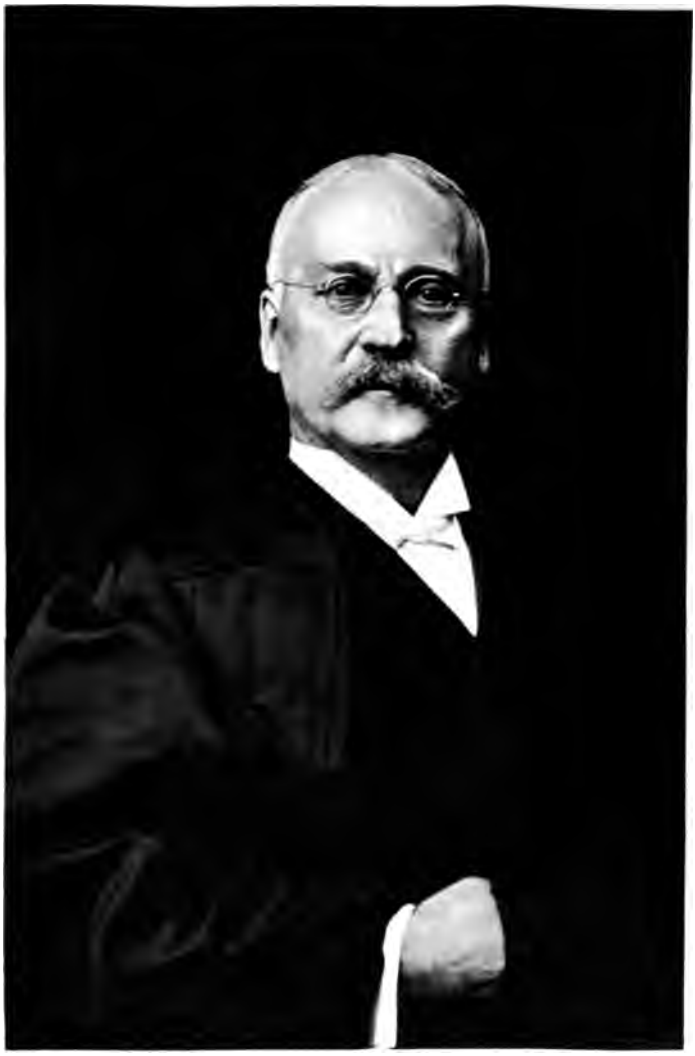


A QUIVER OF ARROWS






PUBLIC LIBRARY



[redacted]

[redacted]





A Quiver of Arrows

BEING CHARACTERISTIC SERMONS OF

DAVID JAMES BURRELL, D.D., LL.D.

DELIVERED IN THE MARBLE COLLEGIATE CHURCH OF NEW YORK CITY

SELECTED AND EPITOMIZED BY

THOMAS DOUGLAS, PH.D.

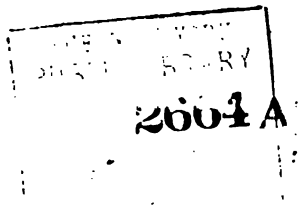
WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

WAYLAND HOYT, D.D., LL.D.



FUNK & WAGNALLS COMPANY
NEW YORK AND LONDON
1902

[redacted]



COPYRIGHT, 1902, BY
FUNK & WAGNALLS COMPANY
[Printed in the United States of America]
Published in November, 1902



CONTENTS

		PAGE
PREFACE		ix
INTRODUCTION.	By Wayland Hoyt, D.D. LL.D.	xi

TEXTUAL SERMONS

CHAPTER		
I	Ahab's Harness	3
II	Come and See	9
III	In No Wise	14
IV	One Thing	16

EXPOSITORY SERMONS

V	Asking the Way	21
VI	The Twice-taught Lesson	25
VII	Losing One's Life	29
VIII	The Jericho Road	32
IX	The Silent Architect	37
X	Hobab of Akaba	42
XI	Loose Him, and Let Him Go	49
XII	How Jericho Fell	54
XIII	The Perfect Law of Liberty	58
XIV	Standards of Measurement	62
XV	God and the People	66
XVI	The Lord's Horses and Chariots	72
XVII	Don't Worry	76
XVIII	The Delays of Providence	84
XIX	The Spirit of the Age	88
XX	Gleaning	92

TOPICAL SERMONS

CHAPTER		PAGE
XXI	Character Building	101
XXII	Seven Wonders	106
XXIII	Shall We Know Each Other in Heaven?	111
XXIV	Wild Oats	118
XXV	The Hindered Builders	122
XXVI	The Lepers of Samaria	127
XXVII	The Duty of Faultfinding	131
XXVIII	The Branded Conscience	136
XXIX	Good out of Nazareth	142
XXX	Saul at the Witch's Cave	149
XXXI	Esther in Shushan	154
XXXII	Business	158
XXXIII	Choosing a Friend	162
XXXIV	Birds of Passage	167
XXXV	The Lost Opportunity	172
XXXVI	The Logic of Events	179
XXXVII	At Their Wits' End	185
XXXVIII	Stumbling-blocks	190
XXXIX	The Fading Leaf	194
XL	The Outside of the Platter	198
XLI	The Sign of the Prophet Jonas	203
XLII	In the Fields at Eventide	207
XLIII	Shibboleth	210
XLIV	Sunday Pleasures	217
XLV	Making Haste	222
XLVI	Wisdom	227
XLVII	Paul at Athens	232
XLVIII	The Mother Bird and Her Young	238

DOCTRINAL SERMONS

XLIX	Let Us Go On	245
L	The Resurrection Here and Now	250

CHAPTER		PAGE
LI	Assurance	255
LII	Orthodoxy	260
LIII	The Old Book and the New Century	265
LIV	Offended in Christ	272
LV	Yom Kippur	276
LVI	He Shall So Come	279
LVII	The Golden Passional	285
	BIOGRAPHICAL SERMONS	
LVIII	Washington	291
LIX	Judas Iscariot	297
LX	A Coward, and What Became of Him (Pilate)	303
LXI	Joan of Arc	309
LXII	Cromwell	314
	ETHICAL SERMONS	
LXIII	The Ascent of Man	323
LXIV	Waste of Power	327
LXV	The Secret of Power	331
	SOCIOLOGICAL SERMONS	
LXVI	The Church and the Saloon	337
LXVII	The Sunday Newspaper	345
	ANNIVERSARY SERMONS	
LXVIII	Come In, Thou Blessed of the Lord (A New-year's Meditation)	353
LXIX	The First Easter Sermon	359
LXX	Taxing Under Cyrenius (A Christmas Meditation)	363
	TOPICAL INDEX	371





PREFACE

THE Gospel that is preached from the pulpit of The Marble Collegiate Church of New York attracts more than that limited circle of hearers known as a "parish congregation," and yet reaches hearers other in kind than the heterogeneous assembly of "seekers for the new thing," which is known as a "metropolitan audience." Lovers of the old Gospel, that which has been "delivered to the saints" in all ages, are those who turn their steps toward this church. They come from every part of the country. A Southern railway magnate voiced a common feeling when he said to the writer: "Whenever my business takes me to New York, the most delightful anticipation of the trip is that I shall hear Dr. Burrell. He is a preacher fearless and true—a man among men."

It is for such members of Dr. Burrell's wide parish, as well as for those who have never had the opportunity of hearing him, that the present selection of the best and most typical of his discourses has been made. It is hoped that these sermons will serve not only for delight and edification, but for use and inspiration. Young preachers, and preachers not so young, students in theological seminaries, members of the Y.M.C.A. and of the Y.P.S.C.E., will find in them models of exposition and homiletic method.

Dr. Burrell has no "mannerisms," no tricks of phrase or figure, and yet the happy and wholly unexpected turn



which he gives to a familiar passage of Scripture, and the new illumination by which he makes radiant with modern thought and feeling a time-worn Biblical narrative, are so characteristic of the preacher's personality as to assign him a unique and singular place among American preachers. It is therefore not only as a storehouse of ripened conclusions, but as a seed-bed of fertile suggestions, that the book will have value.

While the selection and condensation of these sermons have been made with the permission of Dr. Burrell, responsibility for such work, in conception and execution, rests entirely with the editor. The favorite sermons of a preacher are not always those most esteemed by his congregation. And, as there is difference of taste in selecting sermons, so is there choice in digesting them. Different hearers assimilate different thoughts as the principal elements of a sermon upon which to feed their souls. The writer has, therefore, no apology to make for choosing the sermons which he likes, and presenting as their main features those points which most forcibly appealed to him. In the topical Index at the end of the book readers will find the principal arguments and illustrations of the sermons grouped alphabetically under the proper heads.

The discourses have been divided into Textual, Expository, Topical, Doctrinal, Biographical, Ethical, and Anniversary Sermons. Naturally many of them might have been assigned to more than one class. But the order in which arrows are drawn from the quiver matters little. It is how they are driven home that counts for good archery. That they may reach the hearts of many readers is the sincere prayer of

T. D.

INTRODUCTION

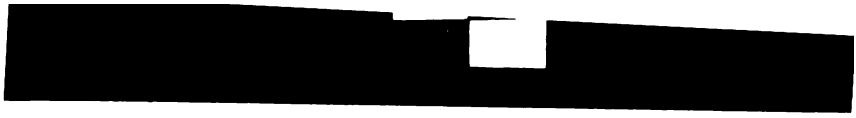
Few carry a quiver fuller of arrows than Dr. Burrell, and of arrows better pointed, straighter in the shaft, or more deftly feathered. And the man is rare who can so skilfully set the arrow on the string, draw the bow with so strong an arm, and, with aim so wise and accurate, strike the target at its center.

We have been archers for the Lord as elbow comrades in the great Northwest—Dr. Burrell and myself. And what a comrade he was to stand next to in the Lord's battle—how steady, stimulating, alert, courageous! How I used to wonder at and rejoice in the swift, various, unrelaxing flight of his splendid and well-aimed arrows! What victories I used to see him win when we wrought at elbow-touch! And now, as the great Captain has set us at duty in space, but not in heart, apart, how I keep on rejoicing that his bow abides in strength, and that his arrows ever increase in number, excellence, and mark-finding!

May this "Quiver of Arrows" do mightily for our Lord, and may this sheaf of them show the rest of us how better to fashion and speed the arrows we must use in our high warfare.

WAYLAND HOYT.





TEXTUAL SERMONS



A QUIVER OF ARROWS

I

AHAB'S HARNESS

> And a certain man drew a bow at a venture, and smote the king of Israel between the joints of the harness: wherefore said he unto the driver of the chariot, Turn thine hand, and carry me out of the host; for I am wounded.
>
> —I. KINGS xxii:34.

AS THERE is something good in every man, so there was something good in Ahab. He was a good soldier, and fought bravely at Ramoth-gilead, where he fell. He was enterprising, as the prosperity of his kingdom plainly proves. He had noble impulses, but they were misdirected. He tried to please everybody, and wound up by pleasing nobody.

One thing spoiled all—he had no religion. He left that to his wife, who was the "Bloody Mary" of his period.

Ahab was a typical character.

There are men of generous endowment, biblical culture, fine impulses, high ambition; but they lack religion. They neglect to take God into partnership with them, as Ahab neglected to take God with him when he went into battle against the Syrians. The flaws in his harness were the means of his downfall. Look out for flaws in character.

I. A FLAW IN THE BREASTPLATE

The breastplate covers the heart. The heart is the center of life.

So religion is a sure defense. No arrow can enter there. It covers the heart as with impenetrable mail. The mob stoned Stephen, Herod murdered John the Baptist, Nero decapitated Paul, and the Jews killed Christ; but the heart of none of them was even so much as touched. The breastplate was without a flaw.

II. A DEFECT IN THE HELMET

The helmet covers the *brain*, the seat of the mind. Mind and heart do not act independently of each other. The one sympathizes with the other. Beliefs and affections cooperate.

Both heart and mind need protection:

1. *Against false philosophy.*—We say that philosophy is a knowledge of the just relation of things. Man should be in just relation with God. When he is not, he is apt to swing off into all sorts of absurdities. For one thing, he will magnify himself and minimize God. Infidelity, unbelief, and all sin are born of this. The helmet is defective. Should he catch a right glimpse of God, he would cry out with Isaiah, "Woe is me, for I am a man of unclean life, and mine eyes have seen the King."

2. *Against unsanctified ambition.*—It is so easy to fall into this error. Just lie on your oars and the drifting is inevitable. Even the apostles, tho surrounded with the best of influences and under the tuition of Christ himself, became victims of it. Scripture is full of warning against it. Experience is embittered by it. Wrecks are here and there all along the history of men and of nations.

3. *Against the darts of the devil.*—The Arabs are expert in the use of the spear. The blow is deadly. Not more so than the darts of the devil. These are *fiery* darts—burning, poisonous, deadly. They are so skilfully

handled that none save the God-man has ever successfully warded them off. They flew thick and fast all about Him in the wilderness, during His ministry, and in Gethsemane's garden.

Aside from Christ, every human being since Adam's day has been hit and hurt. This evil archer has acquired great skill and dexterity at dart-throwing. He is more than a match for the legendary William Tell as a target-hitter. He is powerful, intelligent, and persistent—an enemy to be dreaded. See well to the helmet of salvation, that no dart of the devil may enter to wound the brain.

III. AN OPEN VISOR

The visor covers the eyes. Lust, covetousness, and envy stand ready to enter the soul through the eyes. What the eyes are to the body, directing one's steps, that is *conscience* to the soul. But conscience, again, sympathizes with the *heart* and *mind*. Conscience is trustworthy just in proportion as the heart and mind are right.

There is the danger of self-confidence. Self-confidence is controlled by self-interest. The force of moral distinction is then disturbed. One moral divergence leads to another. Conscience, at first speaking loud and clear as a bell, now utters hoarse sounds and talks in whispers.

This is notorious:

1. *In public matters.*—Men scrupulously honest in private life have been known to swerve from that virtue in public life. I know men not fifty miles from New York who would shudder at the thought of stealing on land, but do not hesitate to steal their neighbors' oysters in the bay. Many a city has its public plunderers who are reputable as private citizens.

Corporations are soulless. Those who administer their affairs are not without souls, and therefore not without responsibility for their ill-doing.

2. *In the press.*—The press is a great power for good or bad. As a rule, editors in their individual capacity incline to do right. Many good men otherwise shield themselves behind the public demand for *news*. They say that they simply voice the sentiments of the populace. It used to be understood that editors molded public opinion. That day is passed, they say. Therefore, many of them declared for Sunday opening of the Columbian Fair and other world's fairs. Now it is Sunday opening of saloons. Those who set religion aside in public matters are not the safest guides, nor are they to be trusted in the thick of the conflict. The chance arrow enters at the eyes.

IV. A LOOSE GIRDLE

In olden time at the sound of the tocsin the order was given to tighten the girdle and to strengthen the loins.

Let the girdle stand for the will.

1. *Can the will conquer evil habit?*—Almost any man will say yes. Experience and observation record miserable failures. Alexander the Great conquered the world, but the evil habit of drink conquered him. He died a debauchee. Evil habit is a conflict of self with self. A soldier who had fought many battles met once at close quarters a man the sight of whom paralyzed his arm. He could not strike his own brother. How much more difficult to contend against one's self! Help must come from without.

2. *Can the will overcome besetting sin?*—A besetting sin of lust followed a Christian brother for fifteen years. He

alternately yielded and overcame, trusting to his good resolutions. Tho failures followed each exercise of his will, he had at last to resort to the power of the Divine will. Paul realized this when he said, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

Tighten the girdle of the will and unite with it the will of God.

V. NO SHIELD

The shield covers the whole person.

The believer's shield is *Faith*. He believes:

1. *In God who made him.*
2. *In God who preserves him.*
3. *In God who saves him by His Son.*
4. *In God who sanctifies him by His Spirit.*
5. *In God, his sovereign, who protects him.*

With such a faith who can fail when attacked? The apostles tried it. The martyrs tried it. The multitudes John saw in his vision on Patmos tried it. And multitudes more in all sorts of trying circumstances have tried it, and still other multitudes are trying it now with good effect. When hope seems to fail, be like the Quaker who said, "Hope against hope."

VI. NO SWORD

"The sword of the Spirit is the word of God." It is believed that Gibraltar as a fort is impregnable. So is God's word. The heavens may fall, but not God's word, even to the jot and tittle.

So armed, a believer does not trust to mere opinion, conjecture, nor skill.

Christ found it the Damascus blade in His great temptation.

1. *Is it temptation on the side of physical appetite?*

"Man shall not live by bread alone."

2. *Is it temptation on the side of ambition?*

"The kingdoms shall be thine if thou wilt fall down and worship me," says Satan. The answer is, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God."

3. *Is it the temptation to work a miracle?*

"If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence." No, again: "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God."

The sword of the Spirit which flashed so effectively in the wilderness is the same weapon that every Christian soldier may use in his battle of life against sin.

The panoply of the irreligious man, notwithstanding his many otherwise splendid qualities, is defective at every point. What, then, shall be done? "Take unto you the whole armor of God." (Ephesians vi: 13–17.)

1. *Watch.* 2. *Pray.* 3. *Trust.*

So armed, the battle is won.

II

COME AND SEE

> Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see.
>
> —JOHN 1:46.

PHILIP was all aglow when he took the good news to Nathanael that he had found the Messiah.

In whom?

Jesus of Nazareth.

Impossible! Can any good things come out of Nazareth, that disreputable village among the hills? No, no, Philip, you can not make me believe any such thing as that. We have been led to believe that He will come through some exalted family and in a manner befitting His glorious and heaven-born mission.

Philip saw that argument was a waste of breath, for his friend was prejudiced. He did the sensible thing. "Come and see." See for yourself. Nathanael came, saw, and believed.

Whom did he see?

I. A MAN

A man is hard to find. Diogenes sought him with a lantern and could not find him.

There are lay-figures, manikins, leather and prunella imitations, and what not; but where is the man?

Jesus differs from other men in respect:

1. *To intellect.*

He saw things *clearly*. No two eyes are alike. There

is a twist in one or the other of them, and sometimes in both.

He saw the truth.

He delved deep into all mysteries.

He saw knowledge.

All knowledge. He untied the knots of philosophy without resorting to any Gordian trick. He touched these things with a fearless hand.

2. *To heart.*

It was pure and benevolent. He hated sin only. No human heart beats precisely as it should, because no man is wholly free from sin.

The old Spartan judge detected the criminal by placing his ear at the hearts of the accused. Jesus knew what was in the heart of man because His own heart was pure and could discern the evil from the good.

3. *To conscience.*

No ship sails without a compass. Yet there is no magnetic needle which points with absolute exactness toward the north. It may be diverted from its proper direction by the magnetism of the atmosphere, of the ship's cargo, of nails in the craft, and other causes. The moral sense in man is diverted by sin.

Christ's conscience is perfect and incapable of misdirection. He was able to see the finest distinctions between right and wrong.

4. *To will.*

He always obeyed God to perfection. God says so. "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." There is war in our members, but none in Christ's.

When Israel Putnam led his Green Mountain Boys toward the North in the French War, his march was

intercepted by a gunboat on the lake. He rowed out in the night and put a wedge in the rudder. Next morning the boat lay helpless with flapping sails. This is precisely what sin does for the human will.

Christ was in harmony with God as a man in a fourfold sense: as to His intellect, His heart, His conscience, and His will—the Ideal Man!

II. A DIVINE MAN

Christ is not only called the Son of Man, but also the Son of God. God said that three times directly from heaven: at His baptism, at His transfiguration, and at His crucifixion (the rumbling earth spoke it, the lightnings wrote it in mysterious characters).

He is different from all other sons of men:

1. *As to His preexistence.*

"Before Abraham was, I am." "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

2. *As to His commission.*

"The Father hath sent me." "Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me to do thy will, O God." Hence,

The Incarnation.

The Cross.

He bore the world's sin in His own body on the tree.

A man went into the forest and cut down a suitable tree. He conveyed it to his shop, laid the measuring-line upon it, and said, "The crosspiece must be twelve spans and the uplift must be ten cubits." And thus he measured the wood on which Jesus died. But who can measure the cross in its truer and higher sense? It is as vast as

the procession of the ages, broad as the world, high as heaven, and deep as hell. This is the magnet which is drawing the world to itself.

3. *As to His departure from earth to heaven.*

His going was as unique as His coming. He ascended not in a chariot, but simply rose of His own power higher and higher until He was lost to the view of the gazing multitude.

4. *As to His coming again.*

"He shall so come as ye have seen him go." There is one chapter still to be written in the life of this Jesus of Nazareth. On His return the rounding out of His Divine career will be completed.

III. THE MESSIAH

The Messianic titles are "Son of Man" and "Son of God," blending perfect manhood with Godhead.

When Nathanael came to Jesus and entered into conversation with Him, he was convinced that he had found the Messiah.

The Messiah was the intermediary between God and man, like Jacob's ladder, whose foot rested on the earth and the top reached to heaven. The angels took up the prayers and sufferings of the fleeing exile and returned with blessings for him.

Jesus is here bearing our burdens on the one hand, and on the other hand working out our eternal welfare. He makes it His special business to save souls. We wonder at the conversion of Saul, who was at one moment breathing out slaughter and the next a penitent sinner seeking forgiveness; at Luther, who was one moment a slave to superstition and the next the champion of justification by faith; at John Newton, who was once the

swearing sailor, a pirate, swinging in his hammock, then a Christian, singing:

> "Amazing grace! how sweet the sound
> That saved a wretch like me;
> I once was lost, but now am found—
> Was blind, but now I see."

Jesus is also at work among the nations. He converts a nation just as He does a man. He has laid His hand upon one nation after another, saving it from heathen darkness and superstition, until to-day we see the map reconstructed. Japan is on its knees; China trembles at His glance; Turkey is writhing under His anger. We look to Jesus to regenerate the nations. Let Nebuchadnezzar relate his dreams. Let the New Testament speak of the future.

At the beginning of this century Gilbert West and Lord Lyttleton set to work to demolish the miracles and resurrection of Christ and the account of Saul's conversion. Both wound up by becoming believers and acknowledging the Messiahship of this Jesus of Nazareth.

III

IN NO WISE

He that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out.

—JOHN vi: 37.

JESUS was preaching from a little boat on the lake. All sorts of people were before. He invited every one to accept salvation. The invitation was extended:

I. TO THE MURDERER

David was an example. His was the sin of adultery, murder, presumption; secret, wilful, deliberate, daring, persistent sin. "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving kindness," he prayed, and he was "saved from all his troubles."

II. TO THE MEANEST AND THE MOST SORDID

Yes, even if fear moves them. "Why will ye die?" The prodigal thought of two things as he sat musing among the swine: (1) of his poverty; (2) of his father's wealth. He finally sat a welcome guest at his father's table.

III. TO THE OLD IN IMPENITENCE AND HABITUAL SIN

The heart runs back along the years, twenty, forty, sixty years. It is hard; ears are dull, conscience is seared. But the promise! "He is able to save to the

uttermost all them that come unto God by him." To the UTTERMOST? Yes, to the UTTERMOST. Example? The thief on the cross.

IV. TO THE BURDENED WITH DOUBT

Were ever such received? Many. Doubting Thomas. Thomas cried, "My Lord and my God."

V. TO THE BACKSLIDER

A star does not swing out of its orbit because gravitation holds it there. A sinner converted is held by the power of God, and he will be brought back from his wanderings. "Return unto me and I will have mercy upon you." A man grows cold hearted, neglects duty, forgets to pray, and still God's "Return" pursues him. Peter's backsliding was forgiven, and on the shore of the lake his commission was restored to him.

It is not for man to limit God's willingness to save, since He says, "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from *all* sin."

But the invitation? It hinges on the coming of the sinner to Christ; and, next, on the sinner's trust in Jesus. "He that believeth shall be saved."

And when shall the sinner come? That question was answered by Charlotte Elliot when she wrote:

> "Just as I am—without one plea,
> But that Thy blood was shed for me,
> And that Thou bid'st me come to Thee;
> O Lamb of God, I come, I come"—

Now! Now!

IV

ONE THING

This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth to those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of high calling of God in Christ Jesus.
—PHILIPPIANS iii : 13, 14.

HERE is the secret of a great life. To know about Christ is one thing; to know Him experimentally is quite another thing. Paul knew both. He had given up everything for Christ.

At the close of life, what did he have to show for it?

He is back in Tarsus. He sees the Isthmian games. The runners are at the crimson line. They have trained away every ounce of superfluous flesh. Every muscle is tense. Eyes are on the marble goal. They eagerly await the signal. The trumpet sounds once, twice, thrice, and off they go like the wind! Their bodies are bent forward, their feet spurn the sanded course, their eyes have no side nor backward glance. *One thing!*

"So run I." He forgets the things behind. He looks ahead. There is the prize which awaits him at the hands of Christ.

Observe:

I. THE COURSE

1. *It is a straight course.*—Not zig-zag.

2. *It is the path of manhood.*—Not an imperfect development.

3. *It is the path of character.*—Not fitful; but a steady going forward.

4. *It is the path of usefulness.*—Personal. The training gave strength. Useless flesh was utilized and put into vigor. Health was the outcome, and also a preparedness for future service.

We are made for two worlds. Water-beetles have two sets of eyes. One pair looks downward seeking a living, the other upward to the blue sky and the sunlight. So we must look after the necessaries of life; but the principal thing is to look upward for the prize.

II. THE MARK

Christlikeness is the goal. Oneness with Him. We shall not be one with Him by gazing at the crucifix; but, rather, starting from the cross, we follow Him as a child in its mother's footsteps. He lived without guide, accepted truth as the chief thing, and went about doing good. We win Christ that way.

This means: Concentration, first, and Unity of Purpose, second.

Paul had three callings. He was:

1. *Called to be a tentmaker.*—He carried his needle about with him in all his journeys. It was his living.

2. *Called to be a philosopher.*—He trained with the rabbis. He graduated at the Jerusalem University. Gamaliel was the chief professor. He knew the philosophy of Greece and Rome.

3. *Called to be an apostle.*—That was his main calling. In this he was single-hearted and persistent. The "one thing."

III. THE PRIZE

"The high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

The proudest moment of the Olympic prize-winner was

when he went up higher to receive the laurel wreath from the king's hand.

But this is child's play. What will heaven be? The race run, then comes the prize at the hands of the King of Kings!

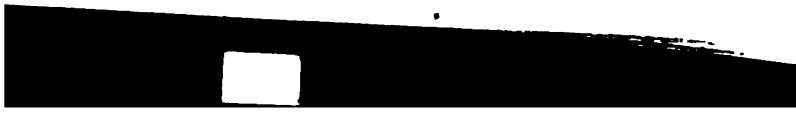
There are two ways of living. One on the low level of life with no elevating thoughts. The other is like climbing the mountain, reaching this height, then pressing on to a higher, and yet another still higher. Higher, higher, higher! Oh! the transport, the sublimity of heaven!

Is it worth while? A thousand times, *Yes!*

"Awake, my soul, stretch every nerve,
And press with vigor on;
A heavenly race demands thy zeal,
And an immortal crown."



EXPOSITORY SERMONS



V

ASKING THE WAY

> They shall ask the way to Zion with their faces thitherward, saying, Come, let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten.
>
> —JEREMIAH 1:5.

THE Babylonian captivity of the Jews was drawing to a close. There were intimations of deliverance, and the question was asked, "Where is the way to Zion?"

We, too, are in exile. We long to return to our Father's house, like the prodigal. We are homesick. A young man asked Jesus what he might do to inherit eternal life. That is the question that interests us. Its answer is of the utmost importance. The right signal is life; the wrong signal is death.

Not long ago a signal-man swung a white lantern as the train went by. On it went till it plunged down an embankment. The cars were piled one upon another. The passengers shrieked and prayed, and many died. All because of a mistaken signal—the white light should have been red.

The Scriptures are authority. They point the way with accuracy, and say that there is but one way.

It used to be a proverb that "all roads lead to Rome." In the center of the Forum was a golden milestone (*milliarium aureum*), at which all thoroughfares converged. Should a traveler inquire the way to Rome, the reply

would be, "Keep on and you will reach the golden milestone."

It is different with respect to the Christian religion. While there are many roads to Rome, there is but one way to heaven. It is the King's highway. Enoch traveled that way; so did Abraham, the prophets, apostles, Polycarp and Ignatius, and all the noble army of martyrs. There is blood in their footprints. Here, too, passed along our fathers and mothers, whom we shall meet in the golden streets.

Time has not shortened the journey. There is now a railway between Joppa and Jerusalem. When Jonah fled from his duty it was a two days' journey. It required almost as long a time when Solomon in his chariot rode to view the rafts of cedar which had been floated from the north. But the King's highway to Zion is just as it used to be. Truth and righteousness never change. The flail, the spinning-wheel, the stage-coach have all gone; but some things remain the same. The air we breathe is the same as Adam breathed. The sunlight is the same that sifted through the mists of chaos. Water is the same as when Jesus tipped the water-jar to His lips at the well of Sychar. The Gospel is like air, sunlight, water—unchangeable.

Notice:

I. THE KING'S HIGHWAY LEADS THROUGH THE VALLEY OF BOCHIM, THE PLACE OF TEARS

Repentance is the entrance door to life. The heart must be broken before it can be bound up. If the rent is to be healed the needle of the law must enter before the thread of the Gospel. "Repent ye, repent ye."

Behind repentance lies the tremendous fact of sin. Sin

is as dreadful as when David cried, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Sin "bringeth forth death."

True repentance is a frank acknowledgment of sin and the quitting it forever. It is a manly thing to repent, as it is manly to acknowledge a fault against a fellow man.

II. THE KING'S HIGHWAY RUNS OVER THE HILL OF ATONEMENT

The Law speaks on Calvary. It says to the sinner: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." Christ spoke of death under the figure of fire and the undying worm. On the cross He expiated guilt. He took our place. The parties to the covenant of grace are the Father, the Son, and the sinner. If all consent, then the sinner is free from the penalty of the law. The covenant holds and the sinner lives.

"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

III. THE KING'S HIGHWAY RUNS THROUGH THE OPEN COUNTRY TO HEAVEN'S GATE

No skulking here! "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the lips confession is made unto salvation." The religion of Christ is not a secret principal, as some suppose, hiding behind the lattice, a shy and modest thing. "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid." "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

This, then, is the heavenward way, through the Valley of Bochim, across the Hill of the Atonement, and along

the open to the Kingdom of God. These are the prerequisites of life: Repent, Believe, Be Baptised (that is, give an outward token of an inward faith).

In Bunyan's dream, Christian and Hopeful, having passed beyond the enchanted ground and the valley of shadows, came to the land of singing birds and blooming flowers. In the far distance the heavenly city glowed in the sun, and at length the pilgrims came to the King's gardens, where they ate of the grapes and pomegranates and passed on. Then came out to meet them, from the innumerable company of angels and just men made perfect, shining ones, who said, "Blessed are they which are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb." On they went with singing and trumpets, nearer and nearer to the Heavenly City. Above its gates they read, "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to enter in." Then the gates opened and voices said, "Enter into the joy of your Lord." As they passed in they were tranfigured. There was the ineffable glory and a great company walking to and fro, singing as they went. Then the gates were shut.

O friends, shall we not be among them? Shall we not have a part in the triumphant chorus and be forever with the Lord?

VI

THE TWICE-TAUGHT LESSON

For they considered not the miracle of the loaves.
—MARK vi:52.

THE feeding of five thousand people was one of the quieter miracles. It was the hiding of the power of Christ. A lad with a basket and a dozen men passed along and the multitude was satisfied. Don't ask how it was done. That is a secret. Only this we know, that Christ did it.

God is always hiding himself. A farmer goes out with wheat and scatters it on the prepared ground. A little later the reaper gathers in the yellow harvest. Beautiful providence! Mysterious concealment of Divine power!

After the miracle, Jesus told His disciples to get into the little boat and go over to the other side. Night came on and with it a terrific storm. In their anxiety and fear they forget the miracle, and another miracle must be performed before they could rightly learn the lesson of providence.

Just at the proper time Jesus appeared to help. Through the darkness they saw the dim figure approaching. They were the sort of men who nail a horseshoe to the mast. Sailors are always superstitious. They trembled with fear until on nearer approach Jesus reassured them. "It is I; be not afraid." Stepping into the boat, wind and wave obeyed His will. There was as

great a calm as on another occasion, standing on the prow of the tossing craft, He said, "Peace; be still."

There are three scenes in this drama:

I. THE STORM

Jesus had gone into the mountain for the night. When the storm burst upon the disciples how terrible was His absence! "If our Lord were only here!" "He was once, and well do we remember how He saved us." In their distress they had forgotten the miracle of a few hours ago.

Life is sad and sorrowful without Jesus. Darkness and danger come to teach us lessons of trust.

III. THE RESCUE

1. *Jesus saw.*—Wonderful eyes! They not only pierced through darkness and blinding storm, but through all space. They penetrate through all roofs; they see all pain, plotting, shame, headache—*all.*

We are never out of His sight. He watches us in our troubles. It is in just such a time that we need to believe.

> "So I go on, not knowing;
> I would not if I might.
> I'd rather walk with God in the dark
> Than go alone in the night;
> I'd rather walk by faith with Him
> Than go alone by sight."

2. *Jesus came.*—At the helpless and hopeless hour. The hieroglyph of the ancient Egyptians to denote impossibility was two feet on the water. But what is impossible to man is easy for God. Let Xerxes move back his throne, lashing the tides in vain fury. God

made the boundaries of the sea—"Thus far shalt thou come and no further."

The disciples, fearing, said, "It's a spirit." Fear betrays a wrong adjustment of moral nature. God comes to us in strange guises of providence. Unlooked-for events occur. Sometimes they make distress more distressing. We do not understand. Jesus delays and we do not know why, any more than did Mary and Martha till their brother returned to life. But He does come when it is best for us that He should. The things we least want is often the very thing and the only thing adapted to our case. The pain we suffer and the sorrow that bears us down would be endured with greater patience if we could but make up our mind that this is the very form in which Jesus comes to us for our deliverance. Oh, for more faith! We forget that He came to us before, just as the disciples forgot the miracle of the loaves and fishes—

> "God moves in a mysterious way
> His wonders to perform;
> He plants His footsteps in the sea,
> And rides upon the storm."

III. THE SWIFT VOYAGE

We marvel at the swiftness of our steamers crossing the Atlantic. But swifter still went that little vessel to its landing-place when Jesus got on board.

1. *Mark the struggle.*—The disciples did all that experienced seamen could have done to meet that storm. Sails were reefed, oars were plied, helm kept her nose to the wind.

Life is a struggle at the best. It must be met by all the skill and energy we can muster. But even then we shall fail without Jesus.

2. *Mark the stress.*—The disciples despaired. Escape was impossible without Divine help. But God loves to deliver at such a time.

A band of Covenanters in old Scotland, men, women, and children, fled for life. As they climbed the hills they saw just across the ravine the bloody Claverhouse and his men. The old minister knelt in prayer, and said, "O God, this is the hour of Thine opportunity. We are helpless. These weary bairns can flee no more. 'Twine our enemies round these hills. Confuse them and deliver us! Cast Thy garment over puir auld Saunders and these frail bairns." And the thing was done that men laugh at: a special providence. A mist rose which stood between the cruel Claverhouse and that little band, so that it could escape.

3. *Mark the agony.*—Nine weary hours they toiled at the oars. Their strength was exhausted; hands blistered; hope gone. Then He came.

It is ever so. When we have done our utmost God must save. "This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom God hath sent."

Blessed is the man who accepts the salvation God offers without money and without price. And thrice blessed when the last hour comes and he enters Charon's boat and finds that the boatman is not Charon, but Christ.

There is an inscription in the Tower of London cut by some prisoner on the wall, who may have spent his life in darkness and suffered death centuries ago on Tower Hill: "A passage perilous maketh a port pleasant." There will be no storm in heaven, and no need to learn the lessons of providence. All will be clear. Let us apprehend this truth now, for it is now that we require it. "Believe in God."

VII

LOSING ONE'S LIFE

> For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.
>
> —MATTHEW xvi : 25.

THAT sounds like a paradox. How can a man save his life and at the same time lose it? Or lose it and at the same time find it?

Jesus had reference to two kinds of life, the earthly and the heavenly; in other words, the carnal and the spiritual.

If you live for the earthly life only, you will lose the heavenly; but if you live for the heavenly, you will lose that sort of life consisting of self-gratification, which is shared by your dog that frolics here and there until weary and then counts it the consummation of happiness to lie down in the shadow and gnaw a bone.

Jesus experienced the higher life. He knew also the lower life. He mingled with men who were dead in trespasses and in sin. They were dead people who jostled Him in the streets and saluted Him in the thoroughfares. Their life was low and sensual. To breathe, eat, sleep, and make merry was the substance of it.

Our Lord's mission was to give life and more of it.

Observe:

I. WHAT IT IS TO SAVE ONE'S LIFE

Multitudes did it in the time of Christ. I once stood on Mount Tom when everything below seemed insignificantly small. Farmers, swinging their scythes, looked like pygmies; horses were no larger than ants; sounds of

laughter in passing carriages were far away. So from His high outlook Jesus saw multitudes living within the narrow horizons of the senses, toiling for gold, chasing thistle-down, and what not. Some were striving for wealth, some intent on pleasure, some pursuing honor—a wretched life at best, in view of the higher and nobler life.

There are people who go about our streets and alleys gathering rags, scraps of paper, and broken bits of glass. It's a poor living, we say. Alas, those who live upon the lower levels are ragpickers all! Are the flotsam and the jetsam worth the saving?

II. WHAT IT IS TO LOSE ONE'S LIFE

Jesus knew. He cast away His life to save our lives. A grain of wheat must die to bring about life, the more abundant life, as we see it in the harvest-field. The great principle of life proceeds out of death. Jesus insists upon self-denial and cross-bearing. This is the first step toward the higher life.

The Chinese tell of an old-time potter who vainly sought to put a certain tint upon his vases, until at last in desperation he cast himself into the furnace; then when the kiln of pottery was taken out, lo! the exquisite color was upon it! So all must be surrendered to secure the beauty of holiness.

Christ could not come down from the cross. A moral necessity was upon Him. Had He done so He could not have saved us. Painful service saves. We rescue others just as we enter into fellowship with Christ's death. "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless, I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me."

To follow Christ is to step in bloody footprints that

oftentimes lead to the haunts of sin and shame, but eventually into the spiritual and eternal life.

Christ must dominate our life and rule all our tasks and pleasures.

When Themistocles was asked why he did not gather the golden chains and other spoils the enemy had thrown away in their flight, he answered, "Thou mayest, for thou art not Themistocles." A man is on the right track when he surrenders the lower for the higher.

III. WHAT IT IS TO FIND ONE'S LIFE

This is life eternal. Life eternal is big with meaning. I wish I knew it better and were able to explain it more clearly. "The life is more than meat," says Christ. We can not grasp the full meaning of it.

It begins now, however. Pardon through Jesus Christ, sanctification through the Holy Spirit, a good conscience, and a hope of glory are among its beginnings. By this we get above the fret and the worry and the sordid cares of our earthly life.

Then the beyond! The blessed beyond!

Ary Scheffer painted "The Temptation in the Wilderness." Christ stands on the spur of the mountain. Below Him is the Tempter, offering all the kingdoms of the world for a single act of homage. The calm face of Jesus is marked by the assurance of Divine authority. With a simple wave of the hand He dismisses the alluring thought. He waves the world aside and wins it. Thus may we attain to the highest by putting away the lowest. Life is ours by bidding our lower natures die the death. "What shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" Or what shall a man give in exchange for his life?

VIII

THE JERICHO ROAD

Then Jesus said unto him, Go and do thou likewise.

—LUKE X:37.

A LAWYER asked Jesus this question, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?"

Two answers were possible:

1. *Keep the Law.*—Obedience to that is life. Disobedience is death.

2. *Accept the Gospel.*—This is the good news that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the Savior of the world. "He that believeth shall be saved."

In answering the lawyer's question, Jesus directed him to the passage written on his frontlet and the phylactery. "What readest thou?" On these leathern bands were inscribed the compendium of the law, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and mind and soul and strength; and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Jesus added: "This do and thou shalt live."

The lawyer was baffled and confused. Said he, "And who is my neighbor?" Then Christ told the story of the waylaid traveler.

It is probable that this story was not a parable, but an actual occurrence. Had there been a daily newspaper in Jerusalem the incident would have been announced in great head-lines:

VIOLENCE ON THE JERICHO ROAD

A Traveler Waylaid and Robbed—Beaten and Left for Dead

The road from Jericho to Jerusalem, a distance of twenty miles, is still called "The Bloody Way." It

runs down an ancient river-bed. The surrounding country is likened to an ocean congealed in some mighty tempest. On every side there are caves, ravines, inaccessible cliffs, lurking-places for banditti. Modern travelers hire an escort for protection. The man Jesus mentioned foolishly set out alone. The thing he might have expected took place.

The Jericho road is not far away. Sin is the robber chief, the Ali-Baba, leading on a furious band of passions and unholy ambitions—highwaymen all. Life runs through their country. There is a cutpurse in every fastness. Oh! how many are wounded and robbed, despoiled of manhood, of self-respect and a good conscience, maimed by their unholy passions, shot through the head by rationalism, or through the heart by convivial vices! We have all heard the arrows whizzing past, been struck by the stones hurtling down upon us from the overhanging cliffs.

What shall Christians do?

I. IMPROVE THE BLOODY WAY

Begin in our own city. Our metropolis is not as safe as Jerusalem was. The politicians there could not well be as corrupt as ours. If the Statue of Liberty could be animated and descend from her pedestal, land at the Battery, and walk through our streets, we should probably see her next morning facing the city with menacing finger. She would look directly into Wall Street with an eye of fire, at the City Hall with aroused indignation, at the red lights with horror, as the opening gateways to Gehenna. She would stop her ears at the sound of rattling dice, the loud oaths, and the lewd conversation of "The Tenderloin." She would withdraw her garments

from the woman "whose feet take hold on hell." She would call the attention of the police to these lawless sights and sounds, and ask if it was not their business to vindicate the law. The tokens of vice in splendid mansions would add to her dismay. At the corner of Fifth Avenue and Fiftieth Street her eyes would flame at sight of a monument of the most brazen and colossal robbery ever known in municipal affairs. Familiarizing herself with New York by night, it would be an open question whether she would return to her pedestal at all; and if she did, it would be with inverted torch or under an extinguisher, feeling that that was hardly the center from which to enlighten the world.

II. THE BURDEN OF BETTERMENT IS ON THE CHURCH

Her ministers must lead the way. It should gladden the hearts of all good citizens that the pulpit had recently thundered forth its denunciations against municipal corruption. Nor has it stopped there. She heard and heeded the injunction—"Cry aloud, spare not, and show the people their sin."

But if the ministers are left alone in this work failure lies that way. Every lover of truth and righteousness must help. The city, ay, the nation, would be speedily reformed if every man would reform himself. There are enough Christians in New York to put an end to every organized form of wickedness. "All at it, always at it, altogether at it," said Wesley.

After all that good people and ministers combined can do, there will still be the wounded and dying who will need to be cared for at the inn. They were once innocent children in their mothers' arms, boys and girls play-

ing among the hollyhocks and sweet-williams in the gardens of the old country homes. Who will be neighbor to them—the tramps, the gamins, the outcasts, the drunkards, the criminals, all immortal souls made in God's image, soiled, dragged in the mire, despoiled of their Divine inheritance? Who will lift them up?

III. THE CHURCH MUST SEE AND ACT

No eye is perfect. Some eyes are dim; others are near-sighted. Some see double.

No one can clearly discern just what is to be done for the betterment of man except he sees through God's eyes. This can be done through the telescope of FAITH. "All things are possible to them that believe." "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

When we do see we must *act*. The priest saw the bleeding form of the man on Jericho road. He was a doctrinaire. His creed stood in his way. Nothing in the way of cold philosophy can help the suffering. So the priest passed by.

The Levite passed by also. His business was to look after the pomp and circumstance of worship—a ceremonialist. The church spire is not to be exalted above the cross. The inward is not to be sacrificed to the outward.

The good Samaritan saw the suffering man and at once acted from the generous impulse of a good heart. You see him dismounting, then kneeling beside the victim, quickly applying remedies to the wounds, speaking comforting words, and lifting him to his own beast, and placing him in an inn, all at his own expense. Our Lord commended the Samaritan.

On the shield of the Humane Society of London a

little girl is represented as trying to revive a dying fire by breathing upon it, and above are the words "*Forsitan Scintilla*" (Perhaps a Spark). Watch for the tokens of life. The spark there may yet kindle.

A woman took her place beside a prison door, resolved to help the first who should issue forth. A poor shamefaced woman came out. At once the hand touched the shoulder, eye met eye, and without a word the watcher kissed the poor faded cheek. "My God!" said the liberated prisoner, "don't do that, don't do that! Nobody's done that since mother died!" The spark was quickened.

The Master said, "*Come.*" He also said, "*Arise.*" Also, "*Follow me.*"

Help those whom sin has waylaid in the Bloody Way, robbed, and left for dead!

Let us be neighbor to every one, as Christ was. *Amen.*

IX

THE SILENT ARCHITECT

> **And the house was built of stone made ready before it was brought thither: so that there was neither hammer nor axe nor any tool of iron heard in the house, while it was in building.**
>
> —I. KINGS vi:7.

IT WAS quite natural for the Israelites, after reaching the promised land, to build a temple in honor of God, who had brought them into it. Before they could accomplish the cherished project, however, there was much preliminary work to be done, many difficulties to be overcome, and not a little planning and unifying of public sentiment.

A protracted period necessarily elapsed. But there was a gradual working up to the starting-point.

David was anxious to make the beginning. The one insuperable obstacle was in his way, that of the fiat of God. Being a man of blood, it was not for him to commence such a holy undertaking. It was left for his wise son Solomon, in more peaceful times, to do it and to carry it to its ultimate completion. "In the fourth year of his reign were the foundations of the house laid and in the eleventh year was the house finished throughout in all parts thereof. So he was seven years in building it."

This was five hundred years after the exodus. Never were grander preparations, never a more magnificent temple—simple, beautiful, from massive foundation-stones to fine-twined curtains. The basilica of St. Peter's

bears the impress of Michael Angelo's mind; St. Paul's at London that of Sir Christopher Wren; but the temple on Zion was projected and reared by the Architect of the Universe; and in wondrous beauty it was not unworthy of Him.

Silently, majestically, its walls rose toward heaven without the sound of hammer or ax, for its stones had been chiseled in the quarry, and its beams had been fitted to their places amid the forests of Lebanon. There was no busy hum or clamor, no voice of the mason calling to the carpenter, no echo of implements among the rising timbers, no running to and fro. It was like a grand Sabbath service.

> "No workman's steel, no pond'rous axes swung;
> Like some tall pine the noiseless fabric sprung."

And this is God's method everywhere:

I. IN NATURE

It was so in the six great creative acts in the building of our world. God said, "Let there be light," and it was so. He said, "Let there be dry land," and it was so. There is no intimation of noisy sounds. Even now the mighty changes of matter through frost and snow and rain and air are carried on silently. The granite mountains of yesterday are smaller than they were a month ago. They are smaller to-day than they were yesterday and they will be smaller still to-morrow. The glacier that moves so slowly as to seem imperceptible, the mighty planets in their orbits whirling through space, are both unheard because no sound attends them. Centuries pass by, and then from the bottom of the sea there emerges the outline of the coral reef.

In the processes of Nature there are three factors:

1. *Force.*—Force defies definition—say it is whatever sets matter in motion. But the word "whatever" suggests the problem. An apple falls. We say it falls by the force of gravitation. But what is that? A tree is shattered by electricity. But what is electrical force? A mushroom grows up in the night; the power within is vital power. But what is vital power? The fact is obvious, but who can explain?

2. *Law.*—Force works through law. Law, we say, is suspended; then there is a miracle. But a miracle is simply force working through law without the intervention of second causes. The miracle of Cana was as silent as the distillations of the vineyard. When Joseph fed the multitudes from the storehouses in Egypt he was hailed by a name which meant the savior of the world. But when God goes forth to feed the living existences in the world there is profound silence throughout all the processes until grace is said—"For what we are about to receive the Lord make us truly thankful."

3. *Mind.*—Here we touch the argument of design. The forces that operate through law are superintended by the Infinite Intellect, and is attested by the adjustment of all things to their uses: the eye to see, the throat to sing, the wing to fly. If I place an Æolian harp in my window I can tell from the result whether or no an intellect controls it. If it produces a mingling of sounds without a theme, I know that the wind blows. But if it produces melody, I know at once that a human hand has touched it. So I look abroad in nature and see proof of a superintending Intellect.

God impresses Himself in silence. The seasons follow each other without a sound. So with the opening of a

... of a snowflake, the revolving of the ... rattles along at the rate of sixty miles ... wearied with the constant noise: ... speeds through space at sixty thousand ... in the midst of the tremendous whirl ... plant's wail, the flutter of the bird's ... of one's own heart.

II. IN HISTORY

... Providence. That is force working ... the supervision of Infinite Mind. The ... ries in the life of men and nations are ... ch.

... to speak of epochs of history. In ... are none such. There are:

... —These are marked by uproar ... garments rolled in blood. The land- ... Great Britain. The marching forth of ... Richard Cœur de Lion. The battles ... gh seas. The charge of the Light ...

... These are more potent than vic- ... for instance, the landing of St. ... demand of Stephen Langdon at ... of a few Pilgrims to this conti- ... nent, and, most of all, the advent ... celebrated by a mother's cradle song ... Glory to God in the highest, and ... ward men." This Prince wields ... the Spirit. "The Kingdom ... servation." That is, not with ... like the coming of earthly ... the growing of the mustard

seed, germinating in silence and becoming large enough for birds to lodge in the branches.

III. IN THE SOUL OF MAN

Here we are in the province of grace. Grace is an inscrutable force, working through law mysterious, under the superintendence of a Mind Infinite.

The beginning of a Christian life is like crossing the tropics. You can not mark the instant. The process is like the drawing of the magnet. All the subsequent life of a Christian is under the same gentle influence. The symbol of the Spirit is a brooding dove. Our gracious God would build up our souls into temples fit for His indwelling, but He would build without the sound of hammer or of ax.

He comes to us to-day not with sound of trumpet at our gates. He stands at our door patiently waiting for us to let Him in. The fears, relentings, and hopes of our hearts are all stirred and kindled by the Divine Spirit.

Grieve Him, and it may be the saddest day of our lives. Bid Him welcome to the chief seat on the throne of our affections, and we may be thrilled and quickened as by a breath from the flaming lips of God.

Let the main thought of the text then be pressed home:

(1) That God would build in quietness; and

(2) That He would build in cooperation with our wills.

X

HOBAB OF AKABA

> And Moses said unto Hobab, . . . Moses' father-in-law, We are journeying unto the place of which the Lord said, I will give it you: come thou with us, and we will do thee good: for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel. And he said unto him, I will not go; but I will depart to mine own land, and to my kindred. And he said, Leave us not, I pray thee; forasmuch as thou knowest how we are to encamp in the wilderness, and thou mayest be to us instead of eyes. And it shall be, if thou go with us, yea, it shall be, that what goodness the Lord shall do unto us, the same will we do unto thee.
>
> —NUMBERS X: 29-32.

MACAULAY says in the time of Charles II. there was one institution that the people prized more than the Monarchy, and that was the Church. It should be so now.

An Arab sheik named Hobab, from the Gulf of Akaba, and a relative of Moses, while at the camp in Sinai, announced his determination to leave for his own land.

Moses and he had a conference. Moses presented a strong argument against the sheik's leaving. The sheik had an experience which Moses and his people needed.

So there are people outside the Church who ought to be in it. They are needed.

Miles Standish, an iron-nerved Puritan, who could hew down forests and live on crumbs, did yeoman work for the Puritan colonists; but he held himself aloof from Church fellowship.

There are good men, believers, and stanch supporters

of Christian doctrine and life, who are yet outside the visible communion. Should all others follow their example there would be no Church at all.

Consider Moses' argument with Hobab:

I. THE LORD HATH SPOKEN GOOD CONCERNING ISRAEL

The Church is a Divine institution:

1. *It is founded upon the living Christ.*—"Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

2. *Its symbol is the Bible.*—

(*a*) Ethical systems are good, but

(*b*) The Scriptures alone are *authoritative.*

3. *Its sacraments are two*—

(*a*) Baptism.

(*b*) The Lord's Supper.

All purifications are set forth in baptism.

All sacrifices are set forth in the Lord's Supper.

4. *Its purpose is propaganda.*—The chief end of the Church is to propagate the Gospel until the "glory of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea."

Politics, philosophy, and other secular subjects may be used, but they should be used sparingly and never to obscure Gospel light. There has been a great outcry against secularizing the pulpit. Many ministers have heard it and are returning to their legitimate vocation. The Gospel is "the power of God unto salvation." It is the only *saving power.*

5. *Thus founded, the Church has been kept by a special providence through all the ages.*—Ecclesiastical history may be written in three chapters:

(*a*) It opens with the call of Abraham.

"Get thee out of thy country and from thy kindred and from thy father's house unto a land that I will show thee." So Abraham journeyed northward along the banks of the great river. Within the fluttering curtains of his tent were the destinies of the future Church. Crossing the Euphrates toward the west, he became literally "the one who crosses over," the first of the Hebrews. Then turning to the south, he passed on to Beersheba, where he settled with his household. His children greatly multiplied. In course of time they went down into Egypt.

(*b*) The second chapter opens with the call of Moses.

Out in the desert of Midian, God said: "I have seen the affliction of my people and have heard their cry. . . . I will send thee to bring forth my people out of Egypt." Then the exodus. The midnight wails. The first-born die, from the king's palace to the peasant's hamlet. It is the signal of the liberty of more than two millions of slaves. Out in the wilderness God led them to Sinai, where the civil and religious constitution was given them, not only for guidance in individual conduct, but to bind them together as a Church and a nation. Then their privations and battles aided materially to keep them in fellowship and a people distinctively peculiar. So that at length they settled in the land of promise a full-fledged nation and no longer a rabble of fugitive slaves. Beyond the shattered walls of Jericho, with Jerusalem as a center, their religion took permanent root.

(*c*) The last chapter opens with the song of the angels: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." The Christ has come—the great head of the Church. He preaches the great truths of the

Kingdom. His credentials are His miracles and His sayings, over and above and beyond all the sayings of the sages. He sets His face steadfast toward the cross. Ere He offers Himself as the paschal sacrifice, He gathers about Him a nucleus of the future Church, and commits the sacred oracles to them and to their successors.

At Pentecost the baptism of fire and power came upon them. The infant body rapidly grew by the addition of thousands, and then on and on and on, until now there can not be less, on a fair computation, than four hundred millions who bow the knee to Jesus Christ. The seed of Messianic truth, placed in the hands of Abraham, has grown into a mighty tree, under whose shadow the nations of the earth take their shelter.

God loves His Church—

> "Her walls before Him stand,
> Dear as the apple of His eye
> And graven on His hand."

II. COME THOU WITH US AND WE WILL DO THEE GOOD

There are advantages in Church fellowship:

1. *The benefit of the avowal.*—Martin Basle, a monk, at the beginning of the Reformation, was convinced of the truth, embraced it, but hesitated to confess it. He wrote his confession on a leaf of parchment: "O most merciful Christ, I know that I can be saved only by the merit of thy blood. Holy Jesus, I acknowledge thy sufferings for me. I love thee! I love thee!" Then he removed a stone from the wall of his chamber and deposited his confession there. It was discovered a hundred years after. Meanwhile no one knew that Martin Basle had found Christ.

About the same time, however, there was another monk, Martin of Wittemberg, who saw clearly from the Scriptures the doctrine of justification by faith, and did not fear to confess the truth. He said: "My Lord has confessed me before men; I will not shrink to confess Him before kings." On the door of the Royal Church he nailed his ninety-five theses. In the Diet of Worms he witnessed a noble confession. The world reveres the memory of Martin of Wittemberg. But as for Martin Basle—who cares for him? The manly thing to do is to confess one's faith, to speak out. "Who is on the Lord's side?" Be not afraid to say, "I am."

2. *The benefit of the eucharist.*—Here we are in the midst of a great mystery. The bread of the sacrament is bread, and the wine is nothing but wine. Yet there is a spiritual influence conveyed in partaking of them. In discerning the bruised body and poured-out blood of Jesus we enter, in some mysterious way, into peculiar communion with him. "He dwelleth in me and I in Him."

The bread and wine are but symbols, priest and prelate to the contrary notwithstanding. A man who was a Roman Catholic married a Protestant. The priest was anxious to bring her into the Roman fold. She would go in on one condition, and that was, if he could convince her that the wafer and the wine were turned into actual flesh and blood when consecrated. The priest accepted the challenge. The lady, however, was allowed to prepare the wafer and wine. They were ready, and the consecration prayer was offered. The priest now declared that the change had taken place. She insisted on his assurance of this. He was sure. Then said she, "I have put poison in both the wine and the wafer; but being no longer wine

and wafer, but flesh and blood, they can not harm you by eating the one and drinking the other." The priest was a man of common sense, and did not take the risk.

3. *The benefit of mutual help.*—The Hebrew word for strength is *chayil*, meaning "twisted." Twist three strands of a cord together and you have strength. No man can stand alone. We need each others' prayers and sympathy. "Two are better than one, for, if one fall the other will lift him up; but woe to him that is alone when he falleth, for he hath not another to help him up."

III. THOU MAYEST BE TO US INSTEAD OF EYES

The Israelites were facing the wilderness. Hobab knew the way. He could help them.

God is doing a great work. He is doing it through the Church. A call goes forth to every earnest man to fall in and cooperate with Him.

Who hears God's voice? There are many voices. The voice of one's own heart. The voice of the world. The voice of the devil. But God's voice is different from all other voices. Blessed is the man who can distinguish it. When Barak went out against Sisera's army the cry was heard from the heights: "To the help of the Lord! To the help of the Lord against the mighty!" And from every direction the tribes came flocking to His standard. But up in the north, the village of Meroz, nestling among the hills, heeded not the call. When the battle was over, and Deborah and her female friends went forth to sing the triumph, there was one minor key:

> "Curse ye Meroz, said the messenger of the Lord,
> Curse ye its inhabitants,
> Because they came not to the help of the Lord—
> To the help of the Lord against the mighty."

No right-thinking man can afford to be left out of the King's army. But can not a man be saved outside the Church? Yes, but that is putting the question on the lowest plane. He loses the glorious opportunity of serving in the Church militant.

> "The Son of God goes forth to war,
> A kingly crown to gain;
> His blood-red banner streams afar—
> Who follows in His train?"

We are going to a land whereof the Lord hath said, "I will give it thee." Come with us, good friend. There are blessings by the way, but it is better on before. There is an inheritance in the Heavenly Palestine.

You may have a part in the redemption of the world under this great Leader. There is something that you can do that no one else can do. Jesus wants you to do it. Enlist and take your place.

Come with us. This great company—the Church—is under God's care and promise.

Come with us. We will do thee good.

Come with us. Your life will yet count for something.

XI

LOOSE HIM, AND LET HIM GO

Loose him, and let him go.
—JOHN xi : 44.

LAZARUS, Martha, and Mary of Bethany loved Jesus.

Lazarus took sick and died. During his illness Jesus was sent for, but did not arrive till death had done its work.

Two unprotected women were breaking their hearts when Jesus came. The three, with a few sympathizing friends, went to the grave. Amid tears and unspeakable agony a strange and altogether unexpected thing happened. Jesus spoke to the dead and the dead returned to life. He spoke again, for the man was bound in the accustomed grave clothes: "Loose him, and let him go." Jesus could have done that Himself, but He wanted those about Him to do some service.

We do not know what business Lazarus followed, nor do we know what were his characteristics—dull, brilliant, or what not—with the exception that he was a good brother and pious. It serves little purpose to know of his talents and abilities when there are wholesome spiritual truths to be learned from this remarkable incident.

I. LAZARUS WAS BOUND

"Loose him" means that he was bound. The bandages interfered with his liberty of locomotion.

There is a bondage worse than that. It is the bondage of sin. "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." Peter told Simon, the conjuror, that he was "in the bond of iniquity." Timothy speaks of sinners, "that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will."

The terrible thing about spiritual bondage is that there is no human power or device that can break the bonds. It has been tried in all the centuries, but failure followed every attempt.

II. LAZARUS WAS LIBERATED

No sooner said than done. Lazarus returned to life and moved among men the moment his bandages were taken off.

Paul says that we "are dead in trespasses and in sins." There is no power in a dead thing. Lazarus would have remained in the grave so far as any power in himself to get him out of it a live man was concerned.

1. *The truth makes a man free.*—The freethinker imagines himself a free man. Doubt is bewilderment and bewilderment is bondage. Prejudice is a man's master. The Brahmin, under bonds to observe the sanctity of law, saw through a microscope a drop of water swarming with animalculæ. To drink water henceforth was to perpetrate ten thousand murders. He satisfied himself by breaking the microscope, so restoring himself to his former bondage. The freethinker gains nothing by destroying the Bible.

2. *There is the liberty of duty.*—Lazarus returned to his daily task. What he said and did may remain a mystery. But this we know, that his life demanded duty to

be performed in common with all good men. After an experience such as his we can well believe that wealth, pleasure, and emolument would have little power or influence over him. The verities of the after life would absorb all his attention.

Had he formerly doubted his immortality he could doubt no more. He would find his duty to say that to others. He knew where he was and whither bound. Lazarus was in his element in doing his duty. I have seen a child lean over the taffrail and with her slender fingers draw a bucket of water out of the ocean. She found no difficulty until the bucket came to the surface; then she could not budge it until the boatswain came to her assistance. So our tasks are easy when in our element; Jesus does the rest.

3. *Lazarus would have a new view of the dignity of men and the importance of believing in Jesus Christ and living right.*—It is marvelous to think that God has put so much dignity upon man as to make him equal with Himself to think and act for himself, which means the power to choose between right and wrong; and also to live side by side with Him forever, which means eternal existence.

4. *Lazarus would have a new view of human equality.*—As a Jew he believed that the Gentile was less in favor with God than himself. "God is no respecter of persons." As a fact, all men are not equal. Some are born in huts, others in palaces; some to hardship, others to ease; and so on through the life of the race. But in God's sight and for spiritual purposes all men are equal. "We brought nothing into the world, and it is certain that we can carry nothing out." Every man must stand for himself.

III. LAZARUS WAS BROUGHT TO LIFE THROUGH JESUS CHRIST

Lazarus was really dead. The proof lay in the fact that his sisters and others who were present at the time believed this and manifested it in their actions; also in the fact that decay in the body had already set in. He was in no trance.

Christ used no legerdemain or artificial means to bring him to life. He did not so much as touch him. He simply called him by his name and told him to "come forth." In obedience to the word Lazarus opened his eyes, struggled to rise, and when divested of his grave clothes mingled with the people.

Now, Jesus did it. If our dead souls ever come to life Jesus must do it. "There is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." He "came to give life and to give it more abundantly." "I am the resurrection and the life."

Creed can not save, nor philosophy, nor morals, nor the Church, nor any other thing.

IV. LAZARUS RETURNED FOR SERVICE

True, one object of his returning was to show the power of Jesus Christ to bring back the dead to life, and thus convince the skeptical; but we would also lay emphasis on the idea of service. Lazarus could give information to the Sadducee who did not believe in the resurrection, nor indeed in the future life. Lazarus gave the death-blow to that numerous sect, and was therefore of immense service to his fellow men.

He could serve men in showing them the right relations between them and God. He could tell them also that liberty was attainable for all. Leaders of the Church

and the nation were thrown into a state of consternation and chaos by his theology. They became so bitter against him that they laid plans to take his life. He was loyal to Christ to the end, as we may well believe.

Let us learn our lesson. Just as Lincoln by a stroke of the pen liberated millions of slaves, so Christ by His death on the cross proclaims liberty to all who will have it, and by this miracle of the resurrection of Lazarus settles the question of immortality and eternal life.

XII

HOW JERICHO FELL

By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days.
—HEBREWS xi: 30.

JERICHO was the key to the conquest of Canaan. The angel of the Lord and Joshua had a conference, and a plan of siege was agreed upon. The plan was unique and quite original; but it was carried out, and Jericho fell.

The secret, if known to-day, would save millions of money, both in war and industry. It is of value, too, to the Church; for the strongholds of evil have to be thrown down.

Islam is a frowning Jericho which stands in the way of progress. There is Judaism, with its walls towering to heaven. There is infidelity, whose bulwarks have resisted the assaults of ages. There is the dram-shop, Sabbath desecration, and licentiousness. How shall these Jerichos be reduced?

By faith. "By faith the walls of Jericho fell down."

I. FAITH THREW UP ITS HANDS

It confessed its inability. On that moonlight night Joshua saw the barred gates and the strong walls. He believed the task was hopeless.

But just here was his strength. So with Paul. "I will glory in my infirmities that the power of Christ may rest upon me." And again: "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

II. FAITH FELL ON ITS KNEES

At this time the Israelites kept the Passover. It delayed them a week, and gave the enemy a chance to strengthen his defenses. But no matter.

During a campaign some one asked the Duke of Alva if he had seen the eclipse the night before. "No," he replied, "I am too busy to look skyward." It is a mistake to go into conflict with the world without the morning prayer, or to go into the darkness and danger of sleep without committing yourself into the hands of God.

III. FAITH GOT HOLD OF THE PROMISE

"I will deliver Jericho into thy hand." That was enough for Joshua.

A young man from a Western town wrote me: "I am ambitious to come to New York and make my way. Can you give me a word of encouragement? I must have something to bank on."

We need a promise from God to bank on. The Book is full of them. "Ask and it shall be given." "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength." "Lo, I am with you alway."

Get hold of the promise. Spread it out. Meditate upon it day and night. Grasp it tighter. Stretch it wider and wider. Lie down upon it. Rest in it.

The great bridge over Niagara began with a kite-string; then came a whip-cord, then a rope, then a wire, then a cable, then a foot-bridge, then a magnificent structure over which railroad trains thunder along.

IV. FAITH FELL IN WITH THE DIVINE PLAN

If General Joshua had called a council of war, which seems to be the modern method, one would have sug-

gested the reduction of Jericho by sapping and mining; another, to place catapults on the neighboring hills to batter down the gates; another, to protract the siege by the slow process of famine. Joshua did no such thing. He acted upon the Divine plan.

There is a Divine plan marked out for our daily life. It consists of salvation by Jesus Christ, sanctification by the Holy Spirit, and evangelization of the world by Christian disciples.

There are other plans, but they are all miserable failures.

V. FAITH THEN PROCEEDED TO BUSINESS

The Israelites formed in line, took the Ark of the Covenant with them, kept silence, marched round the city, and then at the proper time shouted. This was exact obedience, and this was the secret of the success.

A passive faith is a no faith. People do not reach heaven by sitting in their pews and singing hymns.

Off yonder is a ship at sea. Hail it!

"Ship ahoy!"

"Ay, ay!"

"Whither bound?"

"To Canaan."

"Where's your skipper?"

"Down below."

"Your helmsman?"

"Down below."

"Your crew?"

"Down below."

"What are you doing?"

"Drifting."

"You'll never get there!"

And they never will. People do not reach Canaan that way.

1. *It requires courage to follow the Divine plan.*—Many an arrow, doubtless, was shot from the walls, with what was harder to bear—laughter and derision; but the Hebrews kept right on.

2. *It took patience.*—A little fellow in kilts with a fire-shovel in hand was carrying a ton of coal from the sidewalk to the chute. A gentleman said, "Do you expect to shovel all that in?" "Yes, sir, if I keep at it."

VI. GOD DID IT

There was no virtue in that queer procession and in its queerer actions at and around those Jericho walls.

1. *It is so in the matter of salvation.*—We are to repent and believe, but God saves. "Not by might nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord."

2. *It is so in the matter of sanctification.*—"It is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of His own good pleasure." We breathe, but God furnishes the air. We eat, but God provides the bread. We drink, but it is out of the King's well.

3. *It is so in the matter of service.*—"Paul may plant and Apollos water, but God giveth the increase."

Israel could go no farther than the brink of the Red Sea. God piled up the water on either side.

Here we see the secret:

(*a*) Of self-conquest. Begin by kneeling.

(*b*) Of conquest of the world. The humble few from the little Jerusalem chamber was the vanguard of the mighty procession.

We shall win the world yet! "Faith is the victory."

XIII

THE PERFECT LAW OF LIBERTY

> Whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty and continueth therein . . . shall be blessed in his deed.
>
> —JAMES 1: 25.

SOME hold that law and liberty are contradictory terms.

Madame Roland, it is said, on her way to the guillotine, paused before a statue of Freedom and exclaimed, "O Freedom! how many crimes are perpetrated in thy sacred name!"

The French Revolution had its inception and was carried on under the mistaken idea of liberty. In that reign of terror fourteen hundred victims were sacrificed.

Liberty is not an escape from law, exemption from restraint, deliverance from obligation, but rather to move without let or hindrance within one's proper sphere.

A truant boy is not free, however he may enjoy himself in the fields. He is free only when addressing himself to the tasks assigned to him. A prisoner who has broken his bars is under a bondage stronger than locks and bolts, as seen in his furtive glance and guarded step. A sensualist is a slave to sinful indulgence and is lashed with a whip of scorpions. The freethinker, so-called, is in the thrall of prejudice. Lawlessness is not freedom.

The freest man that ever lived was Jesus Christ. Free, because He was absolutely true to His place. There is no liberty except under law. A ship sails free only when she keeps to her course. Christ kept to His course; therefore:

I. HE WAS BOUND TO FULFIL HIS DESTINY

His destiny was outlined in the Word of God. His journey from Bethlehem to Calvary was planned from all eternity. At Nazareth He opened the Scriptures and read: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor, to heal the broken hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." Then He said, "This day is the Scripture fulfilled in your ears." He cried on the cross, "It is finished." What? All prophecy respecting His mission.

So with us. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God that the Man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." This means that God's Word is a rule of conduct for man.

The old soothsayers used the rock crystal in telling fortunes. The Bible is our rock crystal.

II. HE WAS UNDER THE DOMINATION OF DUTY

"Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business." "I must work the works of him that sent me." He was loyal.

Conscience is our monitor of duty. As the clockmaker adjusts the chronometer, so God adjusts our conscience.

Captain Clark was under sealed orders when he took

the *Oregon* from the Golden Gate to Cuba. His course was marked out for him and he held to it.

A man is freest when loyal to the duty marked out for him in the Word of God.

III. HE WAS OBEDIENT

"Lo! I come to do thy will, O God."

When He desired to reach Galilee, He "must needs go through Samaria." There was a *need be* when He came to redeem mankind. There was a *need be* to go to Calvary.

There is a *need be* on all Christ's followers; for suffering humanity cries out for help.

IV. HE WAS UNDER CONSTRAINT BY HIS OWN NATURE

Plato said to Socrates: "It may be that the gods can forgive sin; but I do not see how it is possible, since I do not perceive why they ought to." There is no higher authority than God. We can not see that God ought to forgive sin. We only know that He does.

The sinner's repentance, tears, and reformation do not satisfy Divine justice. A hundred years ago old Dr. Samuel Johnson, bareheaded, standing in the market-place, sought to expiate a sin of disobedience in his boyhood days. He could not do it. Punishment does not change character. Fire can not burn it.

What remains, then? Nothing but Calvary. Jesus can do it, and He alone. He is our great liberator. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty."

Valjean escaped from the galleys. An old man was arrested in his stead. Valjean for a while was content, but there was an inward bondage more galling than

chains. He gave himself up. At that moment he felt free, and a great light shone within him. It is ever so.

Defiance of law is self-enslavement. To do right is freedom. "Stand fast, therefore, in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free"; for this is "the glorious liberty of the children of God."

XIV

STANDARDS OF MEASUREMENT

[redacted] they, measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise.

—II. CORINTHIANS X : 12.

THERE was a coterie of self-righteous people in the Corinthian Church who admired themselves more than they admired others. Paul was a mere letter-writer. He was twitted on his stammering speech and physical infirmities. His reply had a fine, sharp edge—fine, but dignified. Their standards were false.

An authoritative standard is necessary. An artist has his standard, the musician his, the sailor his, the soldier his; so with the tailor, the merchant, the farmer. Why not the Christian? Can we play fast and loose in matters involving eternal realties?

Start with:

I. OUR CONCEPTION OF GOD

All men are looking for God. None can live, labor, or achieve anything without Him.

The pagan makes a god after his own likeness. Isaiah says: "After the figure of a man . . . he falleth down unto it and worshipeth it." The image is endowed with human attributes. Even bugs and beasts and inanimate things, Nilus, the crocodile, and the holy scarabæus, are made to deport themselves like men.

So, also, the Pantheon of Rome. Olympus had its

human gods. Venus was a drab, Mercury a common thief, Jupiter and Juno were no better than they should be—all were colossal men and women, with splendid virtues and magnificent vices.

The tendency is universal.

We, even in this enlightened age, fashion our gods after our own dimensions. We conceive of God what suits us. To the Puritan, He was justice. To the French, *le Bon Dieu*, who would not crush a fly to save a world. To the devout mystic, ineffable holiness. Human measurement is wrong. A traveler on the summit of the Alps in the early morning sees his shadow projected, like a mighty specter, moving along the tops of the distant hills. It is but a *shadow;* that, and nothing more.

God is more than a *reflection* of ourselves. "Thou thoughtest I was altogether such an one as thou art."

God has revealed Himself in the Scriptures. There's the authority.

We shall see His glory, like Moses, if we put away prejudice and mental bias. Only when we do that, and take the Bible as authority, shall we get a true conception of God.

II. OUR CONCEPTION OF THE IDEAL MAN

An ideal is necessary to character. Some reach it by *combination*. Plato got his *Dikaios*, or "just man," in this way. Others get it by selection, having some one in mind as a model: as Howard, Wilberforce, McCheyne, Rutherford, Gladstone, Lincoln, etc. Care should be taken to select one superior and never inferior to one's self. The one-eyed is easily king among the blind. The Pharisee was his own model.

A wrong measurement! Other men's failures can not

save us, other men's successes should never appal us. A man can never know himself by measuring himself with others, for the best is imperfect. Where, then, is the true standard? Where the Ideal Man?

The answer is: "*Christ Jesus.*" All have come short of Him.

All are urged to become like Him.

III. THE TRUE STANDARD OF RIGHT AND WRONG

Man must have a reliable rule of conduct. Can he find it in tradition? That is a strong chain in the sphere of ethics. Many excuse themselves on the ground of heredity. "Father drank to excess. I have inherited the taste for liquor." Our answer is, Let the father's decanter be taken off the sideboard, and let the battle be fought on the ground of responsibility, and God will befriend you.

Can the rule of conduct be found in fashion? Fashion is fallacious. Fashion is one thing to-day and another thing to-morrow. In some parts of Switzerland goitres are in fashion. If a man has not such an excrescence he is called "goose-necked."

Or shall we follow conscience? It is not enough to be conscientious. Habit may spoil conscience. It may be twisted out of its normal condition, as the magnetic needle is deflected by the iron in the ship's hull. Philip II. followed his conscience when he desired to ride up to the bridle in Protestant blood.

God's Word is the standard. All else fails. God gives wisdom for the asking. The Holy Spirit regulates the conscience. The chronometer is adjusted by the sun only. So the conscience alone is regulated by the Word of God as interpreted by the Holy Spirit.

IV. THE RULE OF SERVICE

There is a cry for help everywhere. What shall we do for the tramp, the idler, the ignorant, the sick, the weak-minded, the prisoner, the widows, and the fatherless?

Sociology is well enough in its way, but it treats man only as an animal. Man is more than an animal. He has esthetic tastes. He has a soul to be fed. He lives forever.

Immortal needs are not to be measured by physical standards. The Cross is the standard of all philanthropy; it saves body and soul alike. To try to solve the social problem without Christ is like trying to build a house from the chimney down.

An artist, desiring to paint the Prodigal's Return, engaged a tramp on the street to sit as a model. He thoughtlessly paid him in advance, and the next day the man appeared dressed in new clothes, unfit to serve as a model. So philanthropy can not with soap and water and good clothes fit a prodigal to appear in his Father's house. The philanthropic Christ alone can do that. The change must be inward, and Christ will put on him the best robe.

Self, then, must be eliminated from our moral judgments. Cease measuring ourselves by ourselves and comparing ourselves among ourselves. The Athenian sculptor was condemned for carving his name on an inner fold of his statue's garment. Self must not intrude upon spiritual things. Get back to God. When He speaks put finger on lip. His word is ultimate. All standards aside from His are wrong. His is supreme.

XV

GOD AND THE PEOPLE

Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee.

—PSALM lxvii: 5.

IN a bay window overlooking the Strand, in London, sat Thomas Carlyle, pen in hand and eyes upon the madding crowd. "There are in the world," he wrote, "about thirteen hundred millions—mostly fools." Perhaps so; but he should have added, "*Quorum pars magna fui.*"

These are the people—immortal human beings, jostling one another along the busy highways, intent on getting gold, chasing butterflies and thistle-down, grasping at laurel wreaths, killing time, caviling at destiny, flinging opportunity to the left hand and high privilege to the right, with eyes hot with passion and brows scarred by the plowshares of vain chastisement, blind to yesterday and reckless of to-morrow.

The actors on the stage are kings and potentates, misers and profligates, the upper tenth and the submerged tenth, with the third estate, bearing the burdens of both. All sorts and conditions of men reeling, staggering, jostling—"mostly fools"; fools, who are hastening to the grave without much thought as to what may be beyond it.

Who cares?

God cares.—The philanthropist may leave Him out of his reckoning, but God knows the people. He sees their folly, pities their sorrows, and contemplates their deliverance.

Social science may leave God out of its reckoning. But without God, what message has it? To call God Law, or Force, or Something that Makes for Righteousness, is simply juggling with words. God has eyes to see, a heart to feel, and an arm to save.

There are three facts in evidence of this:

I. HIS PROVIDENCE

Robert Ingersoll once said that if he had the governing of the human race he would improve on the present administration. Unfortunately since then he died, and there is not much hope of any one else undertaking the experiment. The pick of our country may be said to be found in the two Houses of Congress. But with all their concentrated wisdom there is immense room for improvement.

Things may not seem equal in this life. The contrasts appear clear cut: rags and ermine, Riverside Drive and Mulberry Bend, crutches and carriages, the plumed hearse and the dead-cart. Bear in mind that we see only a small section of the arc. Difficulties confront the Ruler of this rebellious world, especially when we remember that He never forces the human will. There is an equable distribution of air and sunshine. Food and medicine are fairly provided, and if some get more than others God should not be held responsible for the squabble in the getting of it. Then something should be put down in favor of the compensations of Heaven. God is making all things to work together for the good of each and all.

II. HIS GRACE

Over against all complaints set that marvelous declaration: "God so loved the world that he gave his only

begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Here is no discrimination, but universal amnesty, on the sole condition that the rebel lay down his arms.

This "only begotten Son" became a man of the people. Let philanthropists and socialists remember that. He was one of themselves, engaged in industrial pursuits, knowing their needs and sympathizing with them.

Aside from His personality, learn what He taught in His Sermon on the Mount. Put the principles He taught there into practise, and you reconcile the lowly and the lofty, the king and his subjects, capital and labor. You cut the sinews of war and make an utter end of injustice. The Golden Rule, and that alone, can usher in the Truce of God.

Add to the personality and the teachings of Jesus the lesson of the Cross. This is an answer to all complaints against Divine equity. He was the people's Christ. "He tasted death for every man." And every man is offered eternal life for nothing and all the benefits in connection with that, both here and hereafter. No respect of persons in all this! Members of the Sanhedrin, the thief on the cross, rabbis, fishermen, knights, friendless outcasts, vestals, magdalens—all gather at the Cross on equal terms.

III. HIS CHURCH

The Church is not a coterie of good people, but sinners distinguished from all other sinners in that they accept Christ as a savior and a guide. Not truth-seekers, but seekers who have found the truth. Not an ethical society, casting about for a code of morals; this also they have found in the Decalog, the Sermon on the Mount, and the example of Jesus, who alone of all others

came up to the full measure of the law. The Church's business is to save men.

The Church stands alone as the great reformatory agency. All other agencies attempt reform from without, this one from within. When you have reformed the heart, the outside life will conform to that as a matter of course. "As a man thinketh, so is he."

Nearly all agencies for the betterment of mankind are supported by the Church. In Manhattan there are about twelve hundred institutions for the relief of suffering. Of these all that depend upon the non-religions for support can be counted on the fingers of four men.

The Church aims at the deliverance of the whole man. It is difficult to consider soul and body apart; as Tristram Shandy says, "They are like a jerkin and its lining—if you rumple the one you rumple the other." Christ fed five thousand while he preached to them. Dr. Guthrie visited a dying woman in an attic. He could make no impression upon her. He said: "My good woman, do you not realize that you are passing into eternity? Do you not care that in a few moments you will stand before the judgment bar?" "No more would you, Dr. Guthrie, if you were as cold as I am," she replied.

To deliver the whole man the Church should not be indifferent to secular agencies. It is not perfect, and may sometimes deserve rebuke, as when Robert Burns wrote:

"O ye wha are sae guid yoursel',
Sae pious and sae holy,
Who've naught to do but mark and tell
Your neebor's fauts and folly—
O gently scan your brother man,
Still gentlier sister woman;
Though they may gang a kennin' wrang,
To step aside is human."

Our cities would perhaps be less like Sodom if the Church had taken more interest in politics. The unscrupulous have had full swing. They naturally want to be let alone. They dread nothing so much as interference by the Church. Their motto is the squatters' claim: "This is our preserve; no trespassing."

The temperance question may not have had proper attention paid to it by the Church. In this Borough of Manhattan there are six thousand dram-shops. Side by side they make a twenty-five mile thoroughfare of man-traps. Here is the breeding-place for political corruption. Let the ax be laid at the root of the tree. Let judgment begin at the house of God.

If the Church of God is the greatest of social forces, the place of true reformers is within its fold. To spend one's energies in the mere betterment of the physical environment of the people is to undertake to boil the kettle at the top. The greatest of sociological problems, when all is said and done, is to regenerate the moral nature of humanity and bring it into harmony with the social order of the universe. That is just what the Church is doing.

By all means, utilize every beneficent agency to make a heaven here below; but alas! for the man who stops there and sees no heaven beyond! The prisoner of Chillon, doomed to a solitary despair, saw a rift in his dungeon wall. Dragging his chain, he clambered upward and looked through. There lay the green valley, with the silver river gliding through, and the blue heavens over all. As he gazed through his tears a bird began to sing:—

> "A lovely bird with azure wings,
> And song that said a thousand things,
> And seemed to say them all to me."

Our world is populous with sorrowing souls. It is for the Church to lighten the pains of their imprisonment, but, best of all, to help them upward to the window that opens to the eternal life. This is to bring them, despite all narrowness of circumstance, into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

XVI

THE LORD'S HORSES AND CHARIOTS

And Elisha prayed, and said, Lord, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw; and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire.

—II. Kings vi: 17.

ELISHA might have cut a sorry figure in managing a catapult or in handling a bow, but he did splendid work as a spy. His gift of spiritual insight enabled him to penetrate the secret chambers of the King of Syria and to disclose his plans.

Benhadad, learning of this, determined to make away with the meddling prophet, and so surrounded Dothan with troops.

Next morning Elisha's young man climbed the walls of Dothan and saw the place was invested. In his fright he hurried to Elisha, saying: "Alas! master, what shall we do?" The prophet prayed that God might open the eyes of the young man to see the mountain filled with horses and chariots of fire which would be more than a match for the Syrian hosts. The prayer was answered.

This young student of Elisha's had to learn some things out of college, like many others. John Brown of Haddington said to his theological class one day: "Young men, there are three things necessary to your success as ambassadors of Christ: one is grace, which the Lord stands ready to give; the second is knowledge, which

I will do my best to give; and the third is common sense, which if you do not have neither God nor man can help you." The young theological student of Elisha's was learning what would be of great use to him in after years. His eyes were perhaps not so good as he had thought they were. There is an optic nerve that lies dormant till God touches it and thrills it. "We see through a glass darkly." As Hamlet says, "There are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in our philosophy." After this the young man could never be the same.

Notice:

I. THAT HE HAD A NEW CONCEPTION OF GOD

Till now he had studied the science of God, and most likely could tell a good deal about His attributes. So with Moses, till he saw the burning bush. He said, "I will turn aside and inspect this great wonder." A new experience to him.

God had suddenly appeared at Dothan as a helper against foes. Peter felt the grasp of a helping hand when sinking in the sea. Doubting Thomas saw the pierced hand which helped him over his trouble. Stephen saw his Lord standing at the right hand of God, and he was helped to bear the onslaughts of stony showers. David said that his foes were like bees about him, but he saw them perish. He recalled an event in his boyhood days when he thoughtlessly disturbed a hive of bees which buzzed about him and stung him, contemptibly small and irresistibly pestilent.

So are the worries of life. They make our days melancholy and our nights sleepless. God is the helper in every time of need.

II. THAT HE HAD A NEW APPREHENSION OF HISTORY

History is the stately stepping of the Almighty along the ages. Had the young man been asked about the war, he probably would have said that the immediate persons concerned were Jehoram and Benhadad. But both were mere puppets in the hands of the Omnipotent. God is present in national affairs.

Pharaoh would have shut up Israel between the mountains and the sea, but the waters became as crystal walls on either side and the way of escape was opened.

Herod would have slaughtered all the male babes of the Hebrews, but the Christ-child was far away.

Philip of Spain would have destroyed Protestantism by his mighty armada, but God breathed on Philip's fleet and scattered it like driftwood on a hundred shores.

III. THAT HE HAD A LARGER VIEW OF THE WORLD

Had the young man been asked the dimensions of the world, he would have said that it was bounded on the north by Dan, on the south by Beersheba, on the east by the Euphrates, and on the west by the great sea.

We are all living in our vicinage. We refuse to see anything beyond the hill. But there is much beyond. The Pillar of Hercules is not the utmost boundary.

Upward the outlook is larger still. The population there is larger than the population down here. There was much truth in old Hesiod's saying: "Thrice ten thousand guardians of mortal men walk the broad, life-feeding earth enwrapped in air; they scan the good and evil deeds of men."

Milton wrote:

"Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth
Unseen, both when we wake and when we sleep."

Our youth when in the school of the prophets probably read of Jacob's dream of the ladder. He perhaps questioned with his fellow students that it was only a dream, and that they were not real angels who passed up and down. To-day he understood. But he saw only a detachment of the myriads of angels and the spirits of just men made perfect.

IV. THAT HE SAW THE MORE SERIOUS SIDE OF LIFE

Immortality was now a fact, whatever he had thought about it before. Life, too, was brief.

The present life is to be measured in terms of eternity. It is but the opening chapter of an endless serial, the vestibule of an infinite temple, the steps up to the mansion.

In view of what the young student saw that day it is safe to say that he would look forward to his ministry with new plans and purposes. He learned some things not to be found in books.

When the saintly McCheyne lay dying, he opened his eyes and said: "I have looked into eternity! Oh, if I could come back now and preach!"

Oh, for open eyes! "Oh, that I might receive my sight!"

And why not have the eyes opened now? Is there any reason why they should not be opened? And any reason why not *now*? We know of none. But we do know that all are invited to the same Jesus who opened the eyes of the blind in the days of His flesh. "He is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever."

XVII

DON'T WORRY

Take therefore no thought.

—MATTHEW vi : 34.

THIS was the old Anglo-Saxon way of saying, "Take no anxious thought." That is, be not over anxious.

Luke gives us the paraphrase, "Neither be ye of doubtful mind."

The figure is that of a ship in the offing, rolling to and fro.

Our religion should hold us steady—anchored—taking hold of that which is within the vail.

Think what the world would be with no fret, no anxiety, no worry! Is fretting not the besetting sin of the Americans? Restless eyes, feverish haste, wrinkled brows, quivering nerves are all too common among us. We are like a train at full speed, stopping only to take more water for more steam, to cool off hot-boxes in order to make greater speed, to make repairs *after* the accident. Of course we have premature breakdowns, nervous debility, insomnia

Other nations are faulty too. Thackeray says: "When I was a boy I wanted taffy. It cost a shilling and I hadn't the shilling. Now I am a man and have the shilling, but I don't want the taffy." Thackeray

was still longing, however, after the unattainable. When a boy it was taffy, when a man it was fame.

Our Lord suggests a remedy. Go into the fields and look at the lilies, see how God cares for everything in nature. He offers no encouragement to improvidence. He enjoins foresight and industry. "Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways and be wise." Insure your house; it may burn down. Insure your life; you may die and leave an inheritance of poverty and distress. Get ready for eternity and clear up your accounts with God; for that is the most serious business this side of eternity. When Paul heard the footfall of the executioners at the door of his dungeon in Rome, he said: "I am ready."

The lilies work but do not worry. They assimilate air, sunshine, moisture, succulents of the earth, and so prepare to bloom in the proper season. They fold their leaves when the storm comes, bow their heads meekly until the clouds roll by. Here's the lesson: abide, and rest in God.

"Take no anxious thought." About what? *Anything*. Worry hinders success. Whistle at your work. An old negress carries a burden on her head that would bend me double. The secret is a perfect poise. Get the burden just over the head, above the conscience, in the zenith of the heart—that is, the precise line of spiritual gravity; then there will be no difficulty in bearing it. Religion is strength.

The common grounds of worry are seven:

I. FOOD AND RAIMENT

Men and women hurrying along the streets mutter "food and raiment." These are the weeds that choke

the Word. They vex, hamper, entangle the plow, trip us up along the garden path, crowd out better things, kill the fragrance and fruitfulness of life.

Christ's argument is:

1. *God remembers all.*—Animal, vegetable, and mineral kingdoms.

2. *God cares especially for man.*—Christ makes mention of care for the lower orders of life, and from that rises to the higher as a logical sequence.

3. *God shows the uselessness of worry.*—Not the fraction of an inch can man add to his stature.

4. *Worry is unchristian.*—Faith is lacking in such a case. To distrust God is to discredit God. He says: "Seek first the Kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added unto you." Most people seek first the things of this life and God afterward.

II. THINGS THAT CAN NOT BE HELPED

Such as irretrievable losses and incurable maladies.

The stoics say, "What can't be cured must be endured." Christian philosophy teaches something better: "All things work together for good to them that love God." "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." "Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed."

God makes no mistakes. If we groan under our burdens, He intended us to be patient. A caged bird gains nothing by breaking its wings against the bars. "Bide a wee and dinna weary" is a wise Scotch saying. God knows all and means all for the best, just as in Joseph's case. Luther says: "If thou hast a sorrow beyond

healing, God can give thee a sweet physical herb called *patientia* that will sustain thee." The word to Paul was: "My grace is sufficient for thee."

III. THINGS THAT NEVER HAPPEN

Anticipating trouble. Plans will come to naught. The flush on the children's faces is alarming. Over-eager creditors and tardy debtors give us the heartache. The next election will go the wrong way. Good news is too good to be true. So we pile it up, and make ourselves and everybody about us miserable. Feelings are fitful. A woman was reading an exciting novel when she ought to have been attending to her household duties early in the forenoon. Her minister happened in and found her crying. Seeing that he was embarrassed, she explained the story she was reading. "It never happened," said the good man, and she saw the folly of her feelings and smiled audibly.

Perhaps Adam worried when he saw the first sunset. The light has gone. Will it never come again? If not, what then? But next morning it rose again and he smiled at his folly.

So God is continuously putting us to shame in the dawn of bright mornings. Life has real sorrow enough without our borrowing more that never comes. "Have faith in God."

IV. PERSONAL SALVATION

No need to be anxious about that. The way is perfectly clear. "He that believeth on the Lord Jesus Christ shall be saved." Is there anything simpler? Anything broader? Anything so well calculated to cover every case? If we accept, we have done our part. It

is a downright insult to God to suppose that He will not do His. Is there anything gained by worrying? On the contrary, there is much to lose. If ever in doubt, the way out of the difficulty is to get down on bended knee and make a complete surrender. Do this as often as needed, just as medicine is taken when needed.

But I can not hold out! Of course not. Let God do the holding. He has a firm grip. The devil will have a hard task to get a penitent sinner out of His hand. He knows that, and he makes it his business to worry him. "No man shall pluck you out of my hand." Paul, what do you say? "I know him in whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day."

V. PROGRESS IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

This also is God's affair. But we are to cooperate.

We are to grow. A marble statue can not grow, because it lacks the life principle. A branch cut from the tree dies because it is severed from the life current. Life necessitates growth. We do not grow by trying to grow, but by obeying the law of growth. When we are united to Christ, the living vine, growth is a certainty, in spite of the sense of shortcomings. The very desire to be better is proof of it. He who busies himself about his master's work need not fret about the deepening of his spiritual life.

The life principle is *Faith*. That's the link that fastens us to Christ. Gastric fluid is a wonderful solvent. It separates and dissolves food, so that the body appropriates and assimilates it. Thus prepared, food is put under contribution to feed the blood and sinew and bone

and marrow, and to further the development of the whole man. So *Faith* makes pain and pleasure, bereavement and joy, success and disappointment, work together for our good. This is the spiritual diet God prepares for us.

VI. RESULT OF OUR LABOR

A Sunday-school teacher said recently, "I have taught for thirty years, and I do not know that I have brought a single soul to Christ." Pause a moment. The work is God's. "Paul may plant and Apollos water, but God giveth the increase." When duty is done to the best of one's ability, responsibility ends there. Some plow and break up fallow ground. Adoniram Judson labored years without apparent fruit. Others go and scatter seed on the ground already prepared. Rutherford Anworth bemoaned his ill success. Others go with sickle in hand and reap a harvest. Such are the Wesleys and Whitfields and Moodys. But "He that soweth and he that reapeth shall rejoice together." "My word shall not return unto me void."

The woman of Samaria left her water-pot at the well and told the people in the city that she had found the Messiah. That was her work. It was well done, and there is a church in Samaria to this day. Philip followed the woman's work and a great revival broke out, so that he had to have help. John and Peter came and reaped the harvest. Then Philip started off to a solitary road and had an audience of only one. But that one was converted and took the Gospel to Ethiopia. The woman, the evangelist, and the two apostles rejoice together.

Be of good cheer. Many a farmer plows and others reap. But what matters it? Each will have his reward

in the long run. "He shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

VII. CONVERSION OF THE WORLD

Blue glasses are not for Christians. I attended a humanitarian congress when some said that the society was going to the bad. For a secular socialist to entertain such a view is a lamentable evidence of color blindness. Gloom may arise from physical disorders or the overturning of personal schemes. We are like a colony of crickets when the plowshare goes through the hills. They begin to chirp that the world is coming to an end. But God reigns, and all things are going on right. We may vanish from sight, but the world will roll on just the same. "Lo! I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

Now, what is the conclusion? Simply take God at His word. He sees the end from the beginning, if we do not. In the court of the prison Jeremiah wept. The Babylonians were battering down the city, and the people were being carried off as slaves. Just then the word of God came to Jeremiah: "Buy the field that is at Anathoth." The very field where was the camp of the Babylonians. Who would buy that? It would go for a song. But the prophet had faith, and he bought it. Then God's word came to him again: "Houses and fields and vineyards shall be possessed again in this land." Events proved the wisdom of the investment.

What outlays of time and energy we should be making if we only trusted God! We note passing errors, and wonder what the end will be. Ground now occupied by the enemy will be occupied by the Church of God.

Let us live in this confidence. Day by day is enough

at a time. Say that a desk has three hundred and sixty-five drawers. Each drawer contains instruction for each day. To open them all at once would produce confusion, perplexity, and embarrassment. In the morning let us open the appropriate drawer, receive our instructions, and keep the rest shut till the time comes. Do this on our knees, and, rising in strong faith, go forth to meet daily duties.

XVIII

THE DELAYS OF PROVIDENCE

> The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.
>
> —II. PETER iii: 9.

THE world is under law. That suggests a Lawgiver. There are rewards and punishments as a sequence of obedience or disobedience. Even the Hindu in his *karma* believes that.

God warns, entreats, condemns, and—suspends sentence. Why this delay?

There was delay in the threat of the destruction of the world by a flood. The people said that old Noah was in his dotage; because he built a ship far away from the sea.

It was so in the case of the Ninevites. The same thing is true in regard to the Jewish nation in its rejection of Christ. It is so now. The world is full of sinners, but God bears with them and is unwilling that they should perish; hence the delays of the execution of violated law.

If this unpunctual administration of affairs be not "slackness," what is it?

I. IT IS NOT DUE TO IGNORANCE ON THE PART OF GOD

When the Romans saw the eyes of their great statue of Jupiter covered with spiders' webs, they gave them-

selves up to an abandon of vice, saying: "He doth not see, neither doth he regard."

But God both sees and regards. He notes all passing events. He needs no detectives nor bloodhounds.

It is not because He is ignorant of our sins that retribution is delayed.

II. IT IS NOT BECAUSE OF INDIFFERENCE ON HIS PART

The school of Epicurus said: "The God we worship is a large God, too busy with the affairs of universal government to heed our peccadillos. He presides over the splendid feasts of Olympus. He wheels the worlds around their orbits. We are little people; what cares he for us?"

Not so with our God. He knows what sin is—what it has done: how it has ruined souls, desolated homes, overthrown governments, depopulated the world, and peopled hell.

III. IT IS NOT BECAUSE HE IS IMPOTENT TO PUNISH SIN

It is as easy for Him to destroy a world as to crush an insect.

An infidel in New York City challenged God to strike him dead. Why did not God do it? Because a man spared is a more impressive proof of Divine greatness than a man slain.

On one occasion, however, God did show His power, as in the destruction of Korah and his followers.

I. IT IS BECAUSE HE IS LONG-SUFFERING

He can afford to wait. "One day is with him as a thousand years." He never loses His temper. If we could

men with His eyes all the sin and shame, the vice and uncleanness, the rebellion and blasphemy—if all the roofs were lifted and all hearts opened before us, we should cry: "Burn up the world, O Lord, because they defy thy mercy and offend against thy law." But He spares till all resources are exhausted. His patience is infinite.

V. HE IS NOT WILLING THAT ANY SHOULD PERISH

He knows the meaning of that word "*perish*." It is the wail of the mother at the death-bed of her child. "Turn ye, turn ye; for why will ye die?" "Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out."

VI. HE WANTS ALL TO REPENT

There was once a highwayman along the "Bloody Way" from Jerusalem to Jericho whom God saw and yet spared. The civil authorities knew of his deeds of violence, murders, and robberies. They were not so "slack." They arrested the bandit, placed him on trial, and sentenced him to death. It was during his execution that the long-suffering of God was manifested; for in the throes of death he uttered the repentant cry, "Lord, remember me!" God forgave even him.

A girl left her home and abandoned herself to a life of shame. She became a common drab. She heard a voice in the streets of Capernaum one day, and Jesus forgave her.

A lad reared in the rabbinical schools of an Asian city became fanatical. He went to Jerusalem, joined himself to the enemies of Christ, and made havoc of the churches. But God forgave Saul of Tarsus.

But delays are only for a time. There is a fearful

looking for of judgment to the finally impenitent. "When he shall whet his sword, who shall stand before him?"

> "His mills grind slow,
> But they grind woe."

God delays His punishment to all now living. Alexander besieged a city, kindled a beacon on a neighboring hilltop, and announced that all who surrendered while it burned should be spared.

The beacon of God's mercy has been burning long for some of us. Make an end of folly. Come and be saved. "Now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation."

XIX

THE SPIRIT OF THE AGE

> And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle.
>
> —REVELATION 1: 13.

HESIOD tells of a gradual decadence from the Golden through the Silver, the Brazen, and the Heroic to the Iron Age.

Milton sang:

> "For if such holy song
> Enwrap our fancy long,
> Time will run back and fetch the Age of Gold."

But time need not run back, for the Golden Age is before us:

> "We are living, we are dwelling
> In a grand and awful time;
> In an age on ages telling
> To be living is sublime."

It is scarcely a hundred years since the days of primitive lamps, which the Scotch call "crusies," almost identical with those taken from Roman tombs. Leger, of Paris, invented the flat wick in 1783. Then came illuminating gas. In 1801 Sir Walter Scott wrote from London to a friend in the Highlands of experiments in gas illumination: "There is a fool here who is trying to light

the city with smoke." To-day we have electricity. Jupiter Tonans holds the torch for us.

A similar advance is made in civilization:

I. THIS IS THE AGE OF REASON

A man makes his protest against the voice of the masses or against the powers that ought not to be.

Bancroft says: "The most stupendous thought that was ever conceived by man, such as had never been dared by Socrates, took possession of Descartes in his meditation on a November night by the banks of the Danube. Conscious of his own freedom, he stood over against tradition, all received opinion, all knowledge, all existence, except his own mind, thus asserting the principle of Individuality as the keynote of all coming philosophy and political institutions." Every man his own philosopher. The test is reason.

1. *There is a protest against the authority of civil power over heart and conscience.*—Civil authority forbade Peter and John to preach the Gospel.

2. *There is the protest against the authority of the Church.*—Luther burned the pope's bull.

In many moral movements, however, the pendulum may have swung too far. And therefore we find that

3. *There is a protest against the authority of God's Word.*—The captain of a vessel may be excused for rejecting the counsel of every fisherman who undertakes to instruct him. But if his independence leads him to throw overboard the compass and chart, he shows himself to be a fool.

Some teachers have attempted to overthrow the inerrancy of Holy Writ. The human mind must have authority to rest upon; if not the Bible, then the pope.

Guizot said: "Reason will solve all." But he found himself in a whirlwind of perplexity and doubt. In after years he fled to the authority of the Holy Scriptures.

II. THIS IS THE AGE OF HUMANITY

1. *The Church has to do with society.*—The home, the public school, and the hospital are the three pillars that uphold the social fabric. These institutions are Christian. Christ went down to the halt and the maimed and the blind. He taught His disciples to follow in His footsteps.

2. *The Church has to do with the body politic.*—"Give me the penny," said Jesus. "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's."

It would be well if preachers and all good people would take a hand in cleansing the politics of New York City. There can be no better instrument for this purpose than the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Use it.

Avoid sentimental sociology. See to the spiritual needs of the community. Reforms will necessarily follow. Bethesda is not the central fact of Christianity, but Calvary.

The Scotch built a strong chain bridge. A Frenchman copied from it and built a similar one over the Seine, but it was lighter and airier. The middle bolt was omitted as clumsy and unnecessary, but the bridge collapsed on the first day of its opening.

The middle bolt of Christianity is Christ Jesus.

III. THIS IS THE AGE OF SPIRITUAL DYNAMICS

It is the missionary century.

The keynote is the word "go." "Go ye everywhere and proclaim the Gospel." William Carey, the conse-

crated cobbler, David Livingston, the diligent weaver, and others obeyed the command, and to-day the good news encircles the globe.

These heroes and heroines did not go alone. Christ was with them. That is the secret of the marvelous progress of the Gospel to-day. Sir Rivers Thompson, the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, says: "Christian missions have done more for India than all other agencies combined."

A greater century has dawned upon us than any in the past. "I hear the sound of conflict yonder," said blind John of Bohemia at the battle of Crecy. He was old and blind and wounded unto death. His French troops wavered. He called to them: "Gather around me close; lead me on so far that I may swing my sword once more."

The moral conflict is now on. Get into the thick of it. Swing the sword of the Spirit. The victory is nigh. The bells of heaven echo back the Golden Age!

XX

GLEANING

Is not the gleaning of the grapes of Ephraim better than the vintage of Abi-ezer?
—JUDGES viii : 2.

A SINGULAR battle took place between the forces of the Israelites and the Midianites. By Divine direction the army of General Gideon was reduced from thirty-two thousand to three hundred, lest they should ascribe the victory to their own prowess rather than to God. These three hundred on the hillside were to meet the Midianites occupying the valley beneath, compared to grasshoppers as to number. Each man was provided with a lamp, a pitcher, and a trumpet. As prearranged, the hostile camp was surprised at dead of night. At a given signal the lamps flashed forth, the pitchers were broken, the trumpets blared, and a mighty united shout echoed through the valley: "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon!" The enemy, sleeping in their tents, awoke, sprang from their couches, bewildered and terrified by the clangor and the flashing lights, and fled in disorder. The three hundred in hot pursuit intercepted the fugitives at the fords of Beth-barah. Heralds were sent to Ephraim, who hastened to the fray and captured two princes—Oreb and Zeeb.

When the battle was over, Ephraim, always captious and overbearing, demanded of Gideon why they were not sent for at the beginning. Gideon might have told them that they were cowards, brave enough to chase a

flying foe, but not to be trusted in high places on the field; that they were proud, envious, and insubordinate. Instead, Gideon, wise and tactful, replied: "What have I done in comparison with you? God hath delivered unto your hand the princes of Midian. Is not the gleaning of the grapes of Ephraim better than the vintage of Abiezer?" So Ephraim was conciliated. "A soft answer turneth away wrath."

Ours is a Golden Age. Our fathers garnered the vintage with strife and travail and garments rolled in blood. We gather up the fruits of victory. We are gleaning the grapes.

To particularize:

I. THIS IS THE AGE OF TRUTH

1. *The body of truth is larger than formerly.*—Aristotle was among the most learned of the ancients. To-day, were he living, he might find difficulty in passing a preliminary examination for admission to a grammar-school.

Each generation has contributed its part to the treasury of knowledge. One settled the matter of the earth's rotundity. Another gave the law of gravitation. Another the conservation of force. One gave gunpowder, another steam, and still another electricity. One argued out the doctrine of the Incarnation, another the personality of the Holy Ghost, and still another Justification by Faith.

These are postulates upon which we rear a superstructure of other truth.

To be sure, there are people still who insist upon demonstrating fundamental facts, as if seamstresses should insist on sewing with a fish bone, or farmers on plowing with a crooked stick. History is not a treadmill turning round and round and going nowhere. It is

rather the King's highway, on which are gathered up the achievements of those who have gone before.

2. *There is a truer spirit of toleration.*—Two hundred and fifty years ago the papal council required Galileo to get down upon his knees and say, "I abjure, curse, and detest the heresy of the motion of the earth, and I promise to teach that the earth is the center of the universe and an immovable body." Arising, he muttered between his teeth, "Nevertheless, it does move." Now a man may hold either with Galileo or with John Jasper, of Richmond, without molestation.

In the Continental Congress the Hon. John Jay opposed opening the sessions with prayer because there were Quakers, Presbyterians, and Anabaptists on the floor, and these representatives of the sects might not listen with patience to the prayer of one not of their particular sect. The vintage of Abi-ezer and the gleaning of the grapes of Ephraim are the same, and prayer to-day is revered by whomsoever offered. The spirit of toleration and of true fellowship exists throughout Christendom.

3. *There is a truer orthodoxy.*—Denominations are loyal to the old landmarks. If you want to find skepticism, go back to the time of the apostles who fought Arianism, Gnosticism, Diocetism, Ebionism, Neoplatonism, and countless other erratic modes of faith. Or if you want to find heretics, go back to the Middle Ages, when the Bible was chained to the monastery pillars, and see the wide-spread revolt against the absolutism of the Church, when bulls and decretals were enforced by scourge and thumbscrews and fagot. If you are in quest of heretics, go back to the Reformation or to the latter half of the eighteenth century, the time of Voltaire and Rous-

seau and the French encyclopedia, the time of Thomas Paine and the Age of Reason. Only four Christians were found in Yale College when the first Dwight was inaugurated president, and only one in Bowdoin at the same era. Those times are past. The old creeds were formulated and fought for, and the substance of them to-day is held by the leading denominations.

II. THIS IS THE AGE OF MORALITY

This, in the larger sense, as touching all the relations of man with his fellow men.

1. *The industrial reform.*—Strikes were not possible in the days of ancient Rome. At that time wealth and power belonged to ten thousand patricians. Millions of plebeians and slaves had neither wages nor rights accorded them.

As late as Charles II. a popular ballad was written, setting forth the complaint of weavers who, receiving sixpence a day, pleaded for a shilling. It is not ballads now but ballots that tell. Capital and labor, employer and employee have reached the fighting level, not for a shilling a day, but ten times that amount. Robert Burns voiced public sentiment and reform when he sang:

> "When man to man, the warld o'er,
> Shall brothers be for a' that."

2. *The temperance reform.*—In the American Congress of 1789 a duty was placed upon glass, but black quart bottles were admitted free! In 1808 a temperance society was organized. The member who should drink gin, whisky, or rum should be fined twenty-five cents. The member who should get drunk should be fined fifty cents for each offense. We have traveled a great distance

since then. It is total abstinence now for the individual and prohibition for society. Thanks to the fathers for this. We are gleaning the grapes.

3. *Political reform.*—King William III. publicly announces: "Under the existing order of things, to refuse the common practise would endanger the crown." He meant bribery. This was worse than the notorious corruption of Manhattan. But the stirring up of things and the change of municipal officers are favorable signs. The sword of the Lord and of Gideon conquered, so God and the people are controlling things.

4. *Sociological problems.*—Subjects relating to home and society, the care of the poor, the aged, and all incapables are being discussed.

In Christ's time the best hospital Jerusalem could offer was the place by the sheep-market, at the edge of a pool, where cripples sat watching for the movement of the waters. The best sanitarium for the insane in the land of the Gadarenes was among the tombs. The best asylum for the poor was a seat at the entrance of the Temple. To-day asylums, hospitals, and sanitariums abound everywhere.

5. *Personal character.*—Vices once fashionable are disreputable now; betting, horse-racing, duelling, Sabbath desecration, marital infidelity, are under the ban. The Decalog and the Sermon on the Mount have found their way into society and influence personal character. This is a tribute paid to the ethics of Christianity.

III. THIS IS THE AGE OF MORAL ENERGY

The word "activity" expresses the spirit of the times.

1. *Good people once concerned themselves only with their personal salvation.*—The chief end of man was to escape

the unquenchable fire, to read one's title clear to mansions in the skies, to take care of number one.

2. *Good people at another time took a step in advance and expended their energies on the preservation of the Church.*—That was the time of the crusades and the erection of magnificent cathedrals. But it was also the time of the Inquisition, the rack, the guillotine, and the fagot.

3. *Good people have advanced still further, and now the Kingdom, as such, is advocated.*—We call it the missionary age. "The world for Christ" is the watchword. Christianity is no longer provincial but cosmopolitan. The era of exploration was followed by the era of colonization and that by the era of evangelization. The Chinese wall has fallen. The world is open for entrance to the King of Kings. Victory is a foregone conclusion.

Let us fall in with Ephraim for the last gleaning. It is said that the battle of Gettysburg was notable, in that all the troops on both sides were engaged in it. Even old John Burns was there with his flintlock. The last battle of God's great crusade is for us all, and the glory of the last victory also.

Great privilege and responsibility have come to us in these last days.

Shall we glean?





[redacted]

TOPICAL SERMONS

2664 A



XXI

CHARACTER BUILDING

> For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.
>
> —I. CORINTHIANS iii: 11-13.

A COLLEGE student writes to his mother:

"I want your advice on the comprehensive subject of character building. I wish mine to be built right, but I fear I do not know how to go about it. It is not enough to avoid putting in poor material; the edifice can not rise rapidly or well unless good material is put in. And I don't know what quarries to visit in search of this, nor, more important still, how to get it from the quarries and apply it to my needs. Perhaps it is because my needs are as yet rather vague and undefined, for I have never thought much on this matter till recently. What shall I do? Where shall I go?"

This young man, like the young ruler who asked a similar question of Jesus, is not far from the Kingdom. The world is so full of young men who drift like thistledown, that one who seeks a true course in life is worthy of commendation, and his inquiry is deserving of the gravest consideration.

I. LIFE IS STRUCTURAL

Each one of us is building a house to dwell in—to dwell in forever. Build well. Character is the enduring thing. Said Emperor Augustus to Piso, who was rearing a splendid edifice of marble: "Thou delightest my heart, for thou art building as if Rome were eternal." We build for eternity, for weal or woe, a thatched hut, fit only for bats and vermin to revel in, or a sanctuary that shall resound with hallelujahs.

Paul is writing to the Corinthians. Corinth was a city of contrasts—wealth and poverty. The poor lived in straw huts and hovels, the rich in palaces. There was the Palace of the Proconsul, the Posidonium, or Temple of Neptune, and the magnificent theater for the isthmian games. Corinth would appreciate Paul's architectural figure.

II. LET US BUILD WELL THE FOUNDATION

Make no mistake. What are we building upon? Christ tells of two shepherds who sought a suitable place to build their huts upon.

One built by the riverside, where the herbage was green and easy of access.

The other built on a shelf of rock farther up. The building material must be carried up the weary path. It would be inconvenient also to enfold the flock up there every evening.

But the stormy season came on. The house by the riverside was swept away. The house on the rock stood.

It does make a difference what and where we build.

The foundation is already laid for us. "Other foundations can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

To build on Christ is not merely to give an *intellectual assent* to His teachings. The learned Grotius, who had taught theology all his life, lamented at last that it had taken no vital grip on his heart.

Nor to receive Christ *sentimentally*. Rhapsody is shallow and volatile.

Nor to be merely a *member of the Church*. "Lord, Lord, open unto us. We have cast out devils in thy name, and in thy name done many wonderful works." But Christ will say, "I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

Our lives must be like Christ's. His will, His work must be our will and work. His people our people. His word our word—Christ first, last, and all the way between.

1. *Christ is our Prophet.*—That is, our authoritative teacher. Philosophical schools are of authority only so far as they teach what Christ taught. "This is my beloved Son: hear Him."

Christ taught no second probation. He made no mistakes. If there were mistakes in the original Scriptures and He did not know them, He was not wise enough to be a prophet for us. His word is final.

2. *Christ is our Priest.*—He alone is competent to make an atonement for us. He bore our sins on the cross.

3. *Christ is our King.*—He is a savior with a scepter. He demands obedience. He has a property right in us.

No other ever incorporated in himself these three supreme elements—the Prophet, the Priest, and the King.

III. LET US BUILD WELL THE SUPERSTRUCTURE

The superstructure is character. "But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon; for if any shall

build upon this foundation, gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire." Paul here probably referred to the conflagration of Mummius, which consumed a large part of Corinth, B.C. 146. The marble homes and palaces were unharmed, but the straw-thatched huts were utterly swept away. The poor tenants were saved, but they wept over the loss of their all. So Paul utters the warning of the text.

What makes up character?

1. *Creed.*—Archimedes said that he could lift the world if he had a place for the fulcrum of his lever. A man's creed is the point of his leverage. Power is measured by faith.

The potter Palissy believed in white enamel, and spent his life to produce it. Peter the Hermit believed in the rescue of the Holy Sepulcher, and roused all Christendom to accomplish it. Alexander T. Stewart believed in gold as the principal thing, and died in possession of abundance of it. Columbus believed in the Indies of the West, and found San Salvador. Carey believed in India for Christ, and began a great missionary propaganda. A man without a creed is a do-naught. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he."

2. *A consistent life.*—A creed must be worked out in walk and conversation. Piety tells the truth, pays its debts, gives full weight and measure, votes for upright candidates, conserves the peace of home and neighborhood, fears to do evil and loves to do well.

When the cynic Diogenes learned that a fellow philosopher of unsavory character was engaged on an elaborate system of truth, he dryly remarked: "So! and when

will he begin to practise it?" A wiser than he said: "Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savor . . . it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men."

3. *Cooperation with God.*—The edifice is a roofless thing without God. To spend energy in forming a creed and cultivating personal graces is to live a selfish life.

A ship recently went down off this coast and many passengers were drowned. The captain wearing two life-preservers was dragged on board a fishing-boat more dead than alive. On recovering, he said: "Where are my wife and children?" He should have thought of them before. If he had been a man he would have buckled the life-preservers on them and relied on his unaided strength to save himself. He had the form of a creed on his lips—"I love my wife and children"—but not its substance in his heart.

We find God working everywhere, and He urges us to fall into line and do something for the salvation of the world. Jesus said that the harvest was ready for the sickle, yet there were idlers all about who could handle the sickle and reap the harvest.

How is it now?

But can a man be saved without character? Yes, "so as by fire," says Paul. No sight is more pitiable to angels than to see idlers, the empty handed, squeezing through the gates into heaven.

XXII

SEVEN WONDERS

Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this.
—JEREMIAH ii : 12.

CURIOSITY is a racial trait. The Athenians ever sought for something new. The Jews clamored for a sign. A dime museum attracts more than a university course of lectures.

The ancients spoke to their children of seven wonders: The Pyramids; Diana of the Ephesian Temple; Jupiter at Olympia; the Tomb of Mausolus (none know of him except from the monument to which he has given his name); the Colossus at Rhodes; the Pharos (or lighthouse) at Alexandria; the Hanging Gardens of Babylon.

But other wonders have taken the place of these: the steam engine; the sewing-machine; the phonograph; the Statue of Liberty; wireless telegraphy; the submarine cable; Central Park, with marvels of landscape gardening beyond what the ancients knew.

But we have to do for the moment with the wonders in the spiritual realm:

I. FIRST WONDER—AN UNCLAIMED CROWN

The man whom God made in His own image is of royal line king's blood is in his veins.

He is a rational being—he can ponder upon the great questions of the spiritual life.

He is immortal—destined to live forever.

The man to whom God extends this crown is chasing

butterflies, pursuing thistle-down. He calls this pleasure. He toils with the muck-rake, plucking coins from garbage which he calls wealth. He climbs the rocky cliff, carves his name there, falls, and says it is fame! God extends to him the crown, but he pays no heed to it. "Be astonished, O heavens, at this."

II. SECOND WONDER—SECRET SIN

This touches the lowest part of our nature. A dog with a bone sneaks off to a nook in the garden and looks out of the corner of his eyes that none may know his secret. So we bury our secret sins and flatter ourselves that none shall find us out. Indeed!

Four thousand years ago an Egyptian princess died, and her body was committed to a company of priests to embalm with costly spices. They said: "Let us save ourselves the trouble; it will never be known." So they dipped the body of a common Egyptian into bitumen, and placed it in the princess' casket. Some scientists at Tremont Temple, after forty centuries, found out the trick when they unwound the bands. "Be sure thy sins will find thee out." A justly indignant God sees all. Friends laugh, but angels weep.

III. THIRD WONDER—A REPROBATE'S LAUGH

From a maiden riding in a carriage with a companion whose hardened, dissolute face betrayed her vocation there rang out a merry laugh. The sweet-faced girl, late from some country home, was going garlanded to death. She was hurrying to the judgment bar unprepared, and that, too, with a merry laugh. She is not the only one. Dice rattle in upper rooms. Revellers stagger in the streets.

Ribald laughter pierces your ear and pains your heart. Is this a species of insanity?

An asylum is afire. A wretched creature sits aloft, watching the blazing rafters, tossing his hands, and shrieking in glee. It is the maddest, merriest moment of his life. The walls sway, creak, and fall in a mass of ruins. This is a parable of the false revelry of the wicked. "Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this."

IV. FOURTH WONDER—A CHRISTIAN'S GROAN

The Christian is forgiven. His past is all gone like a nightmare. Christ walks by his side as a friend. All heavenly graces and helps are his. Yet we hear him groan—one of the seven wonders! Something is wrong. He should be like the cripple whom Peter healed at the Gate Beautiful, who, walking and leaping, praised God.

One night in Newgate Prison a man sang cheerily and swung like a boy on the post of his bed. "Fine shining shall we have on the morrow." This was John Bradford, and on the morrow he was to die at the stake. But what matter if the day after he shall be in the midst of the merrymaking in heaven? Why should John Bradford not rejoice? The Christian's joy should be like the joy of the springtime, the singing of birds; like the rejoicing over new-found treasure, the dividing of the spoils. He must be light-hearted. It is natural. To groan is unnatural and wrong.

V. FIFTH WONDER—A TATTERED LIVERY

A man appeared at a marriage feast without the customary wedding garment. When questioned he was silent. He could not remain in his own garment, however fine it might be in his own opinion. He was not

merely ordered away; proper persons threw him ruthlessly into outer darkness. That was where he belonged; his inexcusable conduct merited that treatment. We are going to the marriage-supper of the Lamb. Suitable raiment is provided for us. Shall we insult the Host by appearing in the rags of our own righteousness? Would it not have been a gross insult to King Edward to appear at his coronation in unsuitable garb? It is much more so to appear before the King of Kings without the garment of righteousness which He has prepared at infinite pains and at a cost beyond all computation. Our own poor virtues can not entitle us to recognition at the court of Heaven. Devotional pomp and ceremony, baptismal water or sacramental element can not prevail us anything. To trust in them will simply doom us to disappointment.

> "Jesus, Thy blood and righteousness
> My beauty are, my glorious dress;
> 'Midst flaming worlds, in these arrayed,
> With joy shall I lift up my head."

VI. SIXTH WONDER—AN AVERTED FACE

It is strange that men look upon anguish with calm delight. Twenty thousand people tramped miles to a town in a neighboring state to witness a hanging.

When the iron entered the soul of Jesus on the cross, "the people stood beholding" without any responsive thrill of sympathy. It is stranger still that so many of us refuse to look upon Him as our Savior and Friend, when we know so well that "He was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities." We hide our faces from Him; He is despised, and we esteem Him not. He offers help in life's burden, as well as pardon, peace, and heaven. Avert not the face.

VII. SEVENTH WONDER—A WAITING GOD

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." Wonderful patience! Love that passeth knowledge! Let us draw the bolts and let Him in.

"Knocking, knocking, who is there?
Waiting, waiting, oh how fair!
'Tis a pilgrim, strange and kingly,
Never such was seen before.
Ah, my soul, for such a wonder
Wilt thou not undo the door?"

We have kept Him outside our closed doors for many years, and still He waits.

When we were children, mother told us about the waiting Jesus. We promised to let Him in, but broke the promise. Years passed by, still He waits. We said, "To-morrow." Has "to-morrow" come? To-morrow never comes in the spiritual sense. "Now" is here. "Now" is urgent. "*Now* is the accepted time."

A more pitiable sight is seldom seen than the bent form, the gray head, the tottering step, with a heart hard as adamant and a will set against Christ. "Be astonished, ye heavens, at this."

"Knocking, knocking, what, still there?
Waiting, waiting, grand and fair;
Yes, the piercéd hand still knocketh,
And beneath the crownéd hair
Beam the patient eyes so tender
Of thy Savior waiting there."

XXIII

SHALL WE KNOW EACH OTHER IN HEAVEN?

> But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.
> —I. THESSALONIANS iv: 13.

TAKING for granted that there is a heaven, one of the thoughts that charm us is that we may meet those there whom we have loved and lost.

Can we be assured that there is a certainty about this? Are there evidences that can be relied upon? What witnesses have we?

I. THE HEART

The individual heart may throb uncertainly, but the heart of the race never.

All races have held the doctrine:

1. *The Greeks.*—Socrates, with the poisoned cup at his lips, said: "If the common expression be true that death conveys us to the place of departed men, with delight I drink this hemlock, for it sends my spirit to commune with Ajax and Palamedes."

2. *The Romans.*—The hero of the Æneid, going out into the unseen world, was greeted by his former companions:

> "The gladsome ghosts in circling troops attend
> And with unwearied eyes behold their friend."

3. *The Egyptians.*—The Egyptians filled the hands of their dead children with trinkets and toys, and inscribed

upon the byssus bands the hope of an awakening on the morrow.

4. *The Hindus.*—In the institution of the suttee, as the widow ascends the funeral pyre she unbinds her hair and makes her last invocation to Brahma: "Oh, that I might enjoy with my husband as many joyful years in the better world as there are hairs in these flowing braids!"

5. *The American Indians.*—In their funeral ceremonies they have some such custom as the Egyptians; for they bury their dead with the bow and arrow, in hope of a happy hunting-ground beyond.

And the poets and seers of all ages have held to the belief of recognition after death:

"Somewhere in desolate, wind-swept space,
In twilight land, in no man's land,
Two hurrying shapes met face to face
And bade each other stand.
And, 'Who are you?' cried one agape,
Shuddering in the gloaming light.
'I do not know,' said the second shape,
'I only died last night.'"

Thus the race testifies to the home-bringing. The heart brooks no denial. It insists on the recognition of friends in heaven.

II. THE REASON

Reason is more than mere sentiment. It receives any doctrine that commends itself to our judgment. What is the intellectual consensus?

1. *Immortality.*—We receive this doctrine as an intuition. It is one of those universal truths which assert themselves as axioms. It is interwoven with the mental constitution of the race. Do you ask, "If a man die shall he live again?" Listen! Your whole being calls

back, "I shall live and not die." We take the truth of immortality as a postulate, a starting-point from which we pass on to other evidences, whether those of analogy or Scripture.

2. *Identity.*—This follows immortality as a necessary sequence. Self-consciousness is not impaired by death. What is death? "A covered bridge leading from light to light through a brief darkness." A mighty arch sprung over the pathway of our life with brazen gates, which roll back to admit the passing soul, and close again. The friends stand weeping and vainly gazing. The loved one has gone through and continues the journey. His identity remains unchanged. No Nirvana awaits us. No "sinking into the pantheistic Soul, as the drop of water is lost in the fathomless sea." We shall live right on.

3. *Memory.*—There is no Lethe between this world and the hereafter. Memory is the nexus binding the two together.

A Danish poet tells of a glorified spirit who was sent to bring the soul of a little girl to heaven. While winging his way with his precious charge, the child saw a rose-tree in his hand and asked the meaning of it. The angel replied that once upon a time there was a poor lad in the city they had left who lay for a long while dying. That rose-tree was the one solace of his loneliness. It filled the sick-chamber with its fragrance and spoke of the coming spring. And now, at his desire, the flower was to be transplanted to Paradise. Then the child looked up into the angel's face, and asked:

> "'How knowest thou this, bright power?'
> Then splendidly he smiled:
> 'Should I not know my flower?
> I was that sickly child.'"

We shall remember the old home, the tree by the doorway, the well-sweep, the path leading through the meadow, the far-away sound of the school-bell. We remember them here, and they will abide with us when we go hence.

4. *Recognition.*—Immortality, Identity, Memory, Recognition! The first involves the last. If there is to be a heaven at all, we shall know each other.

At a country fair in New England the militia had come from many surrounding towns, and the parade was to be led by old-time musicians. A gray-haired drummer took his place beside a decrepit fifer, veterans of 1812, but unknown to each other. The martial tunes were of long ago. At last the fifer struck up a tune, but the old drummer did not follow. The fire kindled in his eyes, but his drumsticks were motionless. Then, pushing back his cap, he cried: "John, ye've played that before; ye played it at Lundy's Lane! I mind ye. I played the drum beside ye that day. Man, where have ye been, where have ye been?"

There will be times in heaven when we shall catch familiar music and familiar voices, and get glimpses of familiar faces. We shall take each other by the hand with happy greetings, and live over again the long ago.

III. THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

1. *Those texts which refer to home.*—"In my father's house are many mansions." What makes a home? Four walls? The tapestry and pictures and furniture? Or the dear ones? What sort of a home would heaven be if the members of the family did not know each other?

A devout man was asked if he would know his favorite

sister in heaven. He said, "I shall be so occupied with the beauty of the Bright and Morning Star that the might remain for ages by my side without noticing her." Tut! What pious ignorance! There is no incompatability between our Father's love and our love for one another. The love of the father is perfected in us only so far as we love the brethren. Our kinships and friendships are as eternal as the Father's love.

2. *Those which speak of the dead as having rejoined the saints triumphant.*—The patriarchs are said to have been "gathered unto the fathers." Some have supposed this to mean that they were buried in the family burying-ground. That can not be said of Abraham, for he slept in an isolated grave. Nor of Moses, for "no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day." He went up in the mountain, and that was the last seen of him bodily. The passages reach beyond the grave and refer to the reunion of saints.

3. *Those which speak of heaven as a feast.*—"They shall come from the east and the west and the north and the south and sit down with Abraham and Isaac in the kingdom." If we are to know those ancient worthies, why not know those who are nearer and dearer?

It would not be much of a feast if one knew only the host. Celebrating the nuptials of the King's Son, we shall have the joy of knowing and greeting each other. The joy shall be full.

4. *Those which speak of the judgment.*—The culprit must know himself to be the evil-doer. We can neither be justly punished nor rewarded unless we can look back upon our lives. Tichborne's trial turned upon his identity. On this depended an inheritance or a term in

prison. So judgment loses its significance if our identity and memory are eliminated from it.

5. *Those which speak of David's bereavement.*—"Is the child dead?" "He is dead." "Then David arose from the earth, and washed himself, and changed his apparel, and came into the house of the Lord and worshiped; then he came to his own house, and he required that they set bread before him, and he did eat. Then said his servants unto him, What thing is this that thou hast done? Thou didst fast and weep for the child while it was alive, but when the child was dead, thou didst rise and eat bread." David said: "While the child was yet alive I fasted and wept; for I said, Who can tell whether God will be gracious to me, that the child may live? But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me."

6. *Those which tell of the Transfiguration.*—Moses and Elias lived in centuries far apart. They had been in glory a thousand years. They knew each other and had a practical interest in people on the earth and spoke of Christ's crucifixion.

7. *Those which tell of Dives and Lazarus.*—The rich man is spoken of as seeing the poor man, who had begged at his gate, afar off. Dives knew him. He also remembered his living brothers, and wanted Lazarus to go and tell them about his condition and warn them against the place he was in.

Another text should be emphasized in the same connection. Paul tells the Thessalonians that they would be the crown of his rejoicing. He comforts them by saying that the souls of their friends who had been burned, beheaded, sawn asunder, or devoured by lions,

were safe and happy in heaven. Thus the hope of reunion is assured by the Divine Word.

> "As for thy friends, they are not lost,
> The several vessels of thy fleet,
> Tho parted now, by tempests tossed,
> Shall safely in the haven meet."

IV. APPLICATION

Husbands and wives, great was your espousal. Great will be the joy at the reunion.

Motherless children who still feel the lingering touch of mother's arms, you cry for the word from her lips. You shall hear it by and by.

Parents, how dark the wings of the death angel! But it was all right. Remember the archway at the village of Nain. See that mother walking sorrowfully behind the bier. She was a widow and the child was her only son. But Jesus was there. These two met at the gate. Life and death confronted each other. The giver of life said: "Arise." The lad came back to his mother's arms and heart.

Here is the foregleam of the golden day. We shall meet again.

XXIV

WILD OATS

He that soweth iniquity shall reap calamity.
—Proverbs xxii: 8 (Revised Version).

THE ancient Greeks were much given to a form of expression known as "euphemism." It means the speaking of disagreeable things under a pleasant name. Thus the sea which later and franker nations have renamed "Black," they called the "Euxine," or "hospitable," sea. The Furies were spoken of as the "kindly disposed" folk. We have to some extent adopted the practise. Thus death is called a "departure," or "paying the debt of nature"; stealing, "misappropriation"; lying, "prevarication."

A trace of the same thing is seen in our use of the phrase "sowing one's wild oats."

We need less of sentimentalism and more of common sense; less of Greek euphemism and more of Anglo-Saxon bluntness. Call things by their right name; a spade, "a spade," and not "an instrument of manual labor."

Young women need a clearer understanding of this matter. Some think it nice to be familiar with scapegraces. Better press the lips to a white-hot cylinder, grasp the hand of a leper, bathe in a cesspool, than give friendship to a fast young man. Fast young men break young women's hearts.

A troubled mother called upon me not long ago about her son, who had brought shame upon himself and her. She resented my frank statement of the case, and said:

"You know 'boys will be boys,' and I am sure 'he will live it down.'"

Never was a greater mistake. Notice:

I. "BOYS WILL BE BOYS"

Yes, if a young man gets his enjoyment from good blood and healthy spirits. But *no*, if he plays fast and loose with the moralities and proprieties and decencies of life.

Paul had a young friend in Ephesus to whom he wrote: "Be strong; quit thyself like a man; flee youthful lusts; let no man take thy crown."

The young bloods of Ephesus might have excused themselves by the customary expression, "They all do it." Where are these young men now? Timothy was a fine exception. He was a manly young man. There are brave young fellows now who are making a successful fight for manhood, whose laughter is as pure as the laughter of childhood, who have clear consciences, who can look their mothers in the face and kiss their sisters' lips without leaving a sooty stain.

Mark Paul's idea of the two levels of life:

1. *The low level of the flesh.*—Here are the self-pleasers, the mammonites, the epicures, all who are merely getting and enjoying; pampering the senses. They are not a whit better than the beasts that perish. Their aphorism is, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die."

2. *The higher level of the spirit.*—Here are the young men who are fighting the hydra of the senses' passion, building character and making their lives tell for righteousness.

For such there are three safeguards:

(*a*) Conscience. Look out for the engine when the bell rings.

(*b*) Honor. When James Harper was leaving home for the city his mother's last words were, "My boy, you have good blood in you." Young man, remember that God's breath is in your nostrils.

(*c*) Faith. The young man who trusts to self will fail. If he trusts in God he will succeed.

II. "HE'LL LIVE IT DOWN"

Will he? "Can a man take fire in his bosom and not be burned?" Sin leaves its slimy trail behind.

1. *It rots self-respect.*—"It eateth like a canker," spreading to adjacent parts.

2. *It pollutes memory.*—John Gough used to say, "I would give my right arm if I could banish from my memory the scenes of my early youth."

God may forgive a man, but the man can not forget. Not all the soap in Christendom can wash out a scratch on a window-pane. Memory recalls the moral scars upon the soul.

3. *It crowds out nobler purposes.*—You can not get wheat from Canada thistles.

Youth is the seed-time. John de Medici was made cardinal at fifteen. The learned Grotius was a lawyer at seventeen. Lafayette distinguished himself as a friend of our republic at nineteen. Newton worked out his law of attraction at twenty-two. John Calvin wrote his "Institutes" at twenty-seven. Marconi discovered wireless telegraphy at twenty-four. Napoleon made himself the first captain of the day by taking the bridge at Lodi at twenty-seven. Christ worked out the redemption of the world at thirty.

4. *It enslaves in the fetters of habit.*—The saddest walk I know is along the road from Tam o' Shanter's Inn to

Alloway. On either side are the glories of Ayrshire, and in the distance the banks and braes o' Bonnie Doon. Along that road Robbie Burns staggered many a time, the fires of genius in his brain quenched by the fumes of drink. He left this epitaph:

> "Reader, attend, whether thy soul
> Soar fancy's flights beyond the pole,
> Or darkly grub this earthly hole
> In low pursuit,
> Know prudent, cautious self-control
> Is wisdom's root."

5. *It ruins the body.*—Mark the bones in the museum of any hospital, how they have been twisted and scarred by sin! Read what the good Book says:

6. *It destroys the soul.*—To be carnally minded is death. No room in heaven for the fast young man!

A king, dying, imagined that he would be met on the other side by a royal escort to lead him to the throne. Instead he saw a hag repellant beyond description, who, leering and ogling and beckoning, called: "Know you not me? I am your sin and am come to abide with you." The soul is the author of its own endless pain.

Lady Macbeth cried, "Out, damned spot!" But it would *not out.* There is no cleansing by contrition.

> "Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood
> Clean from this hand? No, this my hand will rather
> The multitudinous seas incarnadine."

There is no cleansing except through the blood of Jesus Christ.

XXV

THE HINDERED BUILDERS

It came to pass that when Sanballat, and Tobiah, and the Arabians, and the Ammonites, and the Ashdodites heard that the repairing of the walls of Jerusalem went forward (R. V.), then they were very wroth, and they conspired all of them together to hinder it.

—NEHEMIAH iv : 7.

ONE moonlight night about 445 B.C. a man rode through the streets of Jerusalem. It was the Prime Minister of Persia. He went out toward the south into the Valley of Hinnom, turned northward, passed the pool of Siloam, then westward and southward, completing the circuit. Wherever he went there was desolation, dust and ashes; débris filled the streets.

Next morning he summoned the priests and nobles, and laid the matter before them. "Up, let us build." "The God of Heaven, He will prosper us." They answered, "Let us rise up and build."

I. THE DUTY OF BUILDING

1. *Our life is structural.*—We walk in the midst of ruins. Human nature is a ruin, magnificent in decay, like the grand old ruins of the Orient. Its solitudes are haunted by the lingering echoes of past songs and prayers.

Our duty is to repair the ruin. This is character building.

2. *Society is in ruins.*—Evil lusts and appetites, like

toads and adders, hide under the mold. Envy and malice and selfishness, like owls and bitterns, make their nests in the crumbling arches. A new science is born in these days called sociology, whose function is to repair the waste places of human fellowship. It claims to be a higher sort of architecture, a true edification or temple building, and it behooves all to engage in it.

3. *The world is a ruin.*—It was "very good" at the beginning, but it has been ravaged by sin. The moon, burned over centuries ago, is not more scarred or unsightly. The trail of the serpent is all over it. Tho the cross was reared for its redemption, there are sixteen hundred millions of people who dwell in darkness and in the shadow of death. Here is work for the builder. The kingdom rises slowly. The laborers are few.

Multitudes seek enjoyment only. They are like tramps who go through a village, in at one end and out at the other, lacking all the necessities of life, asking only a hedge to sleep under and provisions by the way.

Life is worth living only as it promises life beyond. The wise man builds, and, like Piso, "builds for eternity." In the building process he is hindered by the adversary.

II. OPEN HOSTILITY

"Now when Sanballat and Tobiah heard that our hands were strengthened for the work, they said, What is this thing that ye do? Will ye rebel against the king?" Rebellion! Ay! A good life is defiance against the devil. A builder on Zion's walls meets opposition. Christ met opposition. So did the apostles, the martyrs, the reformers.

Thank God these are not the days of the ax, the fagot, and the instrument of torture. Blood councils and in-

quisitions have gone by! But there is opposition as effective as the rack and the thumbscrew, which have been replaced by calumny and the boycott. "Fanatic!" "bigot!" These are cutting words skilfully handled by the dupes of the archfiend.

It is said of St. Anthony that, being persecuted, he took refuge in a cave by the River Nile. The red eyes of devils leered upon him, the air was resonant with epithets. Snares were set for his feet. He had no rest. He had made himself obnoxious by his hostility toward social vices and kindred evils.

So we have an Anthony in New York who is threatened with personal violence, imprisonment, and what not, because of his opposition to prevailing vices of the day. For years he has stood under the rain of detraction and misrepresentation. He met the violent opposition of fifty thousand friends of so-called "personal liberty" on account of his endeavor to suppress the circulation of obscene literature through the mails. This is the fate of all earnest souls who attempt to overthrow vice and crime.

III. RESOURCES OF THE ENEMY

It is related that when Sanballat and Tobiah could not hinder the work of the builders, these made sport of them.

"What do these feeble Jews?" said Sanballat. "Are they building a fortification or an altar for sacrifice? Will they revive the stones of this rubbish-heap? Will they finish the work to-day or to-morrow, think you!"

"Ha, ha!" laughed Tobiah. "It's a wall, I reckon; but if a fox should run over it he would break it down."

Then a burst of laughter echoed from the hillsides where the Samaritans were looking on.

Earnest men are derided. More people die of ridicule than of poison, or cholera, or cannon-balls.

"Come, now," says one, "just take a glass; it won't hurt you." "Don't be a chump. Going to the holy club? Ha, ha! Come on." God bless the struggler!

In the church at Treviso is a chain with the imprint of a finger on it. They say that one night Emilani awoke in his dungeon and saw an angel standing near. "Arise and be free," said the angel, and at his touch the prisoner's chains fell off.

The Angel of Deliverance is ever near. A word of prayer is answered by the sound of breaking chains.

If a man tries to make his surroundings better he must expect ridicule. Dives will keep open. Vice will rustle past. Magistrates even will chuckle. "What will you do about it?" Something of this sort took place when David, the stripling, went down to meet the giant. His brothers mocked his presumption. Saul was skeptical at first. The giant had his foolish boast. But the unexpected happened and the deriders felt foolish.

William Carey proposed to evangelize India. He was called the "consecrated cobbler" for suggesting such a nonsensical thing.

Shouts of laughter greeted the early efforts of the Salvation Army. But many of those who came to scoff remained to pray.

IV. COMPROMISE

Open hostility and ridicule failed. So, Sanballat and Tobiah suggested talking matters over and coming to some mutual understanding.

Dangerous ground this. Compromise never won in a

good cause. Our country has suffered from it. Our missionary Boards have suffered from it.

"Nothing is settled until it is settled right," said Abraham Lincoln. There is no neutral ground, no valley of Ono in spiritual matters.

Where shall we compromise? In matters relating to truth? Nay.

In matters of the conscience? Nay. Do right tho the heavens come rattling down upon you.

In matters of our devotion to Christ? Nay. He demands the surrender of all. "Sell all that thou hast and come, follow me." Remember the lighthouse-keeper at Minot Ledge. The storm had raged all day. At night the lights were kindled. The bell struck the hour. The people saw the lighthouse swaying in the storm. Still the light shone and the bell rang. At length a mighty wave rolled in over the reef. The light was out. The bell was silent. But the keeper had done his duty. May death find us at our post!

The watchword in those days of Israel was "Remember the Lord." The guards repeated it as they patrolled the walls. The workmen cheered each other on by the countersign. Fifty-two days, and the work was finished. Then came the march through the city, and the waving of branches and the singing: "Oh that men would praise the Lord for His goodness and for His wonderful work to the children of men."

Brethren, let us up and build. Repair the waste places of our personal character, of society, and of this sin-cursed world. "If God be with us who shall be against us?" "Stand fast, Craig Ellachie!" The day of rejoicing will come.

XXVI

THE LEPERS OF SAMARIA

Then they said one to another, We do not well: this day is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace.

—II. KINGS vii: 9.

THERE was a horrible famine in Samaria.

Worse than that, Benhadad, King of Syria, menaced the city with a vast army. He had been preparing for this ten years or more.

A strange thing happened. In the open space between the walls of the city and the Syrian camp four lepers wandered about in quest of food. They said, If we go into the city there is nothing for us there; for a mother even had slain her infant for food. If we go into the the camp we can but perish, and maybe they will save us alive. So they started off. Drawing nigh, they heard no footfall of sentries, no sound anywhere, no clash of arms. What can this dead silence mean? Getting within the lines, they found that the Syrians had been frightened away by a supposed army of the Hittites from the north or the Egyptians from the south. They had left in a hurry, and the lepers found abundance of food and of silver and gold.

Next morning, looking toward the walls of Samaria with its famished multitudes, one of them said: "My brethren, we do not well; this day is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace." Each had been for himself till the awakening came, when shame and confusion took hold upon them.

The world is famishing for the bread of life which Christians possess and are commissioned to distribute.

There are three motives to beneficence:

I. SELF-INTEREST

We seek our own salvation. That is done by the one act of surrender. But shall we forget others as needy as ourselves, like the thoughtless lepers? Indeed, it is our life to work out our salvation in trying to save others.

A traveler on a cold winter day on a prairie of the West felt a creeping drowsiness coming over him, the harbinger of death. He stumbled over something in the way, and found it to be the body of a man. Dead? The flesh was still warm, the pulse flickered. He chafed him, lifted him up in his arms, and carried him in the direction of a supposed hut. He was weary, but he held out and began to perspire. Finally he reached the place of help. In trying to save this man he saved himself.

Forgetting self we are happy. The happiest man is he who forgets himself in thought for others. What is our Great Example doing at Sychar? He is tired, hungry, and thirsty. But He forgets all that in saving the woman at the well.

What is He doing at Bethesda? Healing.

What is He doing at Gadara, beyond the lake? Casting out devils. He travels up and down caring for others. Why is He climbing up the hill with that awful burden upon Him? He has assumed the world's sin, and will bear its shame, its bondage, and its penalty on the tree. He thus empties Himself, makes Himself of no reputation, forgets Himself for us. "Let this mind be in you."

II. THE COMMON WEAL

This is a higher motive than self-interest. The Christ spirit makes more account of number two than number one. The parable of the good Samaritan teaches that.

A ship was out on the open sea. The captain saw what he thought to be a floating hulk. He descried a signal of distress. The life-boat was sent forth. The rescuers reached the hulk, climbed up, found sailors lying dead and dying here and there upon the deck. Yonder in the shelter of a torn sail lay one in whom life still lingered. He was lifted gently into the boat. As they were about to row away he opened his eyes and struggled to speak. He could but whisper: "Don't go—there's another man." They went back and found the other man. Oh, this is the best impulse of sanctified human nature—to rescue the other man!

Christ had compassion on the multitude and fed them. That's our lesson.

III. THE DIVINE GLORY

This is the highest motive of all. The chief end of man is to glorify God. In the Brahman religion the highest virtue is *Apavarga*, to be swallowed up in Brahma. The devotee sits all day long, indifferent to the world about him, lost in meditation. Ask him what he is doing. "Sinking my personality in the ineffable One." There is a glorious truth lying beneath this pagan conception. True, the highest possible attainment of the human soul is to lose itself in God, not in any pantheistic surrender of personality, not in any subjective process of sentimental reflection, but in the complete blending of the human will with the Divine, and an entire surrender of personal ambition to the Divine purpose.

We can not help God in the administration of universal affairs. Nor will it do to live in the perfunctory discharge of duty. To pay one's debts, speak the truth, and obey the civil law is well; but God pity the man who is no better than the law compels him to be!

God's work for man is great. He expects our cooperation in making the world sweeter and better; that will glorify God.

God identifies himself with the poor and suffering. A Russian legend tells of a poor serf who on a bitter night passed a soldier on guard. The sentinel's teeth were chattering with cold. "Man," said the serf, "you shiver, you are freezing; take my coat." Long years after this the serf came up to heaven's gate. He saw Christ, and said, "Master, you have on my coat." "Ay," said Jesus, "I have worn it ever since thou gavest it me on that cold night." "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

The lepers, tho tardy at first, did a good and generous deed, and none were happier than they in the doing of it. They called the porter and said, "The Syrians have fled; there is food enough and to spare." The porter called the watchman within, and soon the news spread, and multitudes hurried to the gates and were fed. Oh, that was a great day for Samaria! But off on yonder hillside stood the lepers, fingers on lips, crying, "Unclean, unclean!" But they were happy in their deed.

Go with the good news that the siege is lifted, and bid all come to the great feast of God!

XXVII

THE DUTY OF FAULTFINDING

Brother, let me pull out the mote out of thine eye.

—MATTHEW vii: 4.

FAULTFINDERS, like the poor, are always with us. When the gods determined to create this world, Jupiter made a man; Neptune, a bull; Minerva, a house. Momus, standing by, found fault with the man because he had no window in his breast; with the bull, because its horns were not under his eyes; with the house, because it was not on wheels, so that its inmates might move away from unpleasant neighbors. For this Momus was cast out of the divine councils, and has been among us ever since.

Do-nothings are clever in criticizing busy people.

Faultfinding in itself is not a sin. It is a duty. The Levitical law said: "Thou shalt . . . rebuke thy neighbor and not suffer sin upon him." It is enjoined in the New Testament: "Reprove, rebuke, with all long-suffering and doctrine." Much depends on how this is done. Tact is necessary. A new convert asked a fellow traveler if he were a Christian. The gentleman politely replied that he was a professor of theology. Whereupon the questioner said: "I would not let a little thing like that stand in my way." Equally absurd, if not positively sinful, is the way some people proceed to administer reproof. Faultfinding should be helpful and pleasing to God.

I. CAST THE BEAM OUT OF THINE OWN EYE

There is a Spanish proverb: "If our faults were written on our foreheads we should all have to go with our hats pulled over our eyes." Perfection is not expected in the faultfinder. It is required, however, before he finds fault with another that he rid himself of that particular sin. "Wherefore, O man, thou art inexcusable that judgest . . . because thou doest the same thing." Don't preach temperance with a flask in your pocket. Don't preach purity while your lips are blistered by the telling of unclean tales. Don't prate about political reform if you stay away from the polls.

We are prone to criticize that which we ourselves often do. It takes a rogue to catch a rogue. In a lunatic asylum a poor fellow who had reached the depths of folly by squandering his inheritance would point his finger at every visitor with the words: "God save the fool." "Physician, heal thyself" before attempting to heal others.

II. COME OUT FROM YOUR COVERT

"If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between him and thee alone." The greatest evil is wrought by hints and innuendoes. Swift speaks of some who

> "Convey a libel in a frown,
> And wink a reputation down;
> Or by the tossing of a fan
> Describe the lady and the man."

Be frank and generous. A says to B that C has been misbehaving himself. Then Mrs. A canvasses the matter with Mrs. B over their teacups, and presently the neighbor is by the ears. That is called gossip. Nothing

is meaner in the catalog of sins. "Thou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer among thy people: I am the Lord."

The meanest of men was Shimei. David had honored and befriended him. But when David got into trouble and was escaping down the hill, Shimei came out from behind the hedge and threw stones at him, saying, "Come out, come out, thou man of Belial!" Faithful Abishai asked, "Shall I go and take off the head of this dog?" But the generous king replied, "It is not worth while." Set over against that Paul's frankness when he confronted Peter, who was withdrawing from the Gentiles and proving false to his principles. He "withstood him face to face," yet Paul and Peter were the best of friends afterward. It would have been otherwise if Paul had gone behind Peter's back and said what he did. Friends are parted by backbiting. Backbiting is the pestilent thing that keeps out of sight. You hear it buzz, you feel the smart, but you can not reach it.

III. PUT ON CHARITY AS A GARMENT

"Charity suffereth long and is kind; charity envieth not, doth not behave itself unseemly, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil."

A Russian fable tells of a wise swine named Kavron that found its way into the courtyard of the palace, where it roved at will between the kitchen and the stable. On its return the master said: "Well, Kavron, what have you seen? I have heard that kings' palaces are filled with wealth and beauty; that there are rare pictures and splendid tapestry and pearls and diamonds everywhere." "'Tis false," said Kavron; "I saw no splendor —nothing but dirt and offal."

If we proceed in like manner we shall reach a like result. There is some good in every man. It is our duty to look for it. We may go into the back yard of a man's character and find all manner of noisome things, or we may go into his front garden and bear away with us the fragrance of the virtues there.

Lincoln never said a wiser thing than this: "With malice toward none; with charity for all; and with firmness for the right as God gives us to see the right."

IV. TAKE CARE

To pluck a cinder out of an inflamed eye is a delicate matter. You would not go about it with a marlinespike. But a neighbor's faults are sometimes treated in that way. I have known people boast of their bluntness. They call a spade a spade. Frankness is a virtue; bluntness a vice.

Anybody can call a man hard names. Only an expert can help a faulty brother. What wonderful tact our Lord used at the well of Sychar! How skilfully He went about His work, and how well He succeeded! His scathing rebuke went to the woman's inner soul; yet she hurried off to the village as His friend, and became the bearer of the best news ever heard. Christ was a great faultfinder. But how graciously He did it! When occasion required He could hurl lightning denunciation. At other times He was as gentle as a mother to her erring babe. Like a good surgeon, He cut to save. Love was the secret of His art. "I have given you an example," He said.

Our faults are like the dust that gathered on the feet of the Oriental traveler. Christ washes them away. His cross stood like a finger of admonition to put the world to

an open shame. Divine love should kill the foul spirit within us.

Now, what shall we do?

V. CHANGE PLACES

We have to. "For with what measure ye mete it shall be measured unto you again." In the nature of things requital is sure to come. As we sow, so shall we reap.

Adoni-bezek was a barbaric prince. His custom was to torture and mutilate his captives. The time came when he himself was a prisoner of war, and this was his lamentation: "Threescore and ten kings, having their thumbs and great toes cut off, did gather meat under my table. As I have done, so God hath requited me."

The law of recompense executes itself. Haman is ever on his way to the gallows. The royal fiend who gave the signal for the massacre of Black Bartholomew's must lie awake at nights seeing red visions of carnage. As ye have done unto others, so shall it be done unto you.

"Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." Omit that if we are of an unforgiving spirit. We must put aside all grudges, all malice, all envying; then, and not till then, shall we be able to pluck the mote out of our brother's eye.

XXVIII

THE BRANDED CONSCIENCE

Having their conscience seared with a hot iron.
—I. Timothy iv : 2.

PAUL is speaking of certain heretics who had come among the members of the Ephesian Church. He had warned them five years before, when the elders at the seashore saw him off to Jerusalem: "Take heed to yourselves and the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers; for I know this, that after my departing grievous wolves shall enter in among you, not sparing the flock." Now he repeats: "The Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron."

The reference may be to the ancient custom of branding slaves with their master's name. Habitual sin leaves its mark upon body, mind, and soul.

Possibly reference is made to the branding of a malefactor with the sign of his crime, as in the story of "The Scarlet Letter." A stigma attaches to bad habits.

Or perhaps the reference is made to the surgical operation known as cautery, the original of which is the Greek verb *kauterizo*, meaning to sear. The dulling of the moral sense under the slow process of continuance in any sinful practise is like the searing of raw flesh.

But what is *conscience?*

The faculty by which we discern right from wrong.

Con-scire, to know with. With whom? God. Agreement with Him with respect to moral determinations. God is always passing judgment. *Mene, Mene, Tekel*, "Thou art weighed in the balance."

Conscience responds affirmatively to God's moral decisions. In Plato's phrase, "We know with God."

The science of casuistry is broad and bewildering. Many noble philosophers have gone astray in it: Sir William Hamilton, Immanuel Kant, Herbert Spencer, and John Stuart Mill.

Some things may be definitely asserted:

I. CONSCIENCE IS UNIVERSAL

"The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord." A man may be born without sight, hearing, speech, armless, legless, but never without conscience. The heathen have this faculty: "The law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness."

The north star is a beacon-light. Old Palinurus steered his bark by it. The Argonauts in search of the Golden Fleece followed it as a beckoning finger of light. Abraham kept his gaze upon it as he journeyed along the Euphrates to the country that he knew not. Columbus watched it from the bow of the *Pinta*. The Bedouins of the desert direct their course by it. The fugitive slaves followed it through forests and bayous to their bleak haven beyond the northern lakes. All other lights are quenched, but the candle of the Lord burns on. Conscience, like the pole-star, is guide for all.

.I. UNIVERSAL CONSCIENCE IS DISORDERED

No inward sense is an infallible guide. Sin has wrought disorder. An inbound steamer was recently two hundred miles from Nantucket Shoals, as indicated

by compass and sextant, when the outlook cried, "Land ho!" The dangerous shoals were in sight. The ship's carpenter had carelessly driven a nail too near the magnetic needle. A slight deflection may cause a vast divergence at the open end of the angle.*

So conscience is sensitive to sin. To one befogged by indulgence in pernicious habit, in that way lies danger.

When Nero became emperor he wept as he signed the death-warrant of a slave, saying that he was sorry that he ever learned to write. But the tiger whetted his taste for blood and he soon reveled in it. When the cry "Hoc habet!" was heard in the amphitheatre he always gave the signal of death.

What is your darling sin, my friend? Once you scrupled to indulge it. Practise made it easier. Your compunctions gradually vanished. But sin is as sinful as ever. Moral sense may be blunted to the degree of being seared.

What excuse? The criminal says, "I was drunk at the time." But the Court pushes the responsibility back to the first touch of the cup. The saddest of all crimes is the deadening of conscience, when a man prepares himself to do all manner of evil. He must answer for the perversion of the moral sense.

III. CONSCIENCE IS INDESTRUCTIBLE

It may be changed, silenced, but not killed. Like a

* The writer of this digest, in one of his voyages across the Atlantic, was returning home when the ship plunged into a fog. The captain, a careful man, had not seen the sun for three days, and therefore was unable to take his bearings. He caught a glimpse of the sun through the rift of a cloud, and found that the ship was within a few minutes of the dangerous coast of Newfoundland. Engines were at once reversed. From a point northwest the compass was put one point southwest, which led us off many miles on another angle—the angle of safety.

mute angel in the round tower of the soul, it bides its time.

Nero's greatest crime was the murder of his mother, Agrippina. He sent her dead body across the sea for burial. But in the midnight hours he heard her groans from that far-off grave.

King Richard's conscience awoke at Bosworth Field. Ghosts of his victims (Grey, Vaughan, and Rivers) entered his tent with such maledictions as this:

> RIVERS—"Let me sit heavy on thy soul to-morrow."

Then the ghosts of the two murdered princes came, saying:

> "Dream on thy cousins smothered in the Tower."

Then the specter of his murdered wife:

> "Richard, thy wife, that wretched Anne, thy wife,
> That never slept a quiet hour with thee,
> Now fills thy sleep with perturbations."

Then the king awoke, confessing the immortal power of conscience:

> "My conscience has a thousand several tongues,
> And every tongue brings in a several tale,
> And every tale condemns me for a villain!"

Frivolous and dissipated Byron, who was old at an age when most men were young, lamented thus:

> "The mind that broods o'er guilty woes
> Is like the scorpion girt by fire;
> In circle narrowing as it glows
> The flames around their captive close.
> So writhes the mind remorse hath riven,
> Unfit for earth, undoomed for heaven;
> Darkness above, despair beneath,
> Around it fire, within it death."

Here is the basis of eternal retribution. Sin! Penalty! Memory awake! The mind, as Milton says, "is its own place, and in itself can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven."

IV. CONSCIENCE CAN BE RESTORED

How? Get back to God. You do not tinker your own watch, but take it to the watchmaker. God made your conscience, which you have put out of order. He alone can repair it. Tell Him about it. That is prayer.

Two things are necessary:

1. *Cleansing.*—"The blood of Jesus Christ shall purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God."

> "There is a fountain filled with blood
> Drawn from Immanuel's veins;
> And sinners plunged beneath that flood
> Lose all their guilty stains."

2. *Regulating.*—All chronometers are regulated by the sun. All consciences must be regulated and adjusted to the mind of God. God says this in the Scriptures, the only infallible rule of faith and practise. Conscience goes wrong; Scripture, never.

"When conscience," says Dr. McCosh, "has lost its delicate sensibility and power of direction, there seems to be only one method of restoration—namely, by placing it alongside of a pure standard of right and wrong; as the magnetized iron which has lost its virtue is restored by being bound up for a time with a correct magnet."

Scripture is the only correct magnet for the conscience.

The most flagrant crimes have been committed through disordered conscience. Even Paul had to say, "I verily

thought I ought to do it." Sincerity makes a disordered conscience all the worse, and is no excuse for violation of moral law. "*Search the Scripture, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and these are they which testify of me.*"

In the pictures of St. Gudule she is represented as shielding a lantern with her hand. Passing through a dense forest on her way to the oratory an evil spirit met her and blew out the light. A spark lingered in the wick. She uttered a swift prayer, "Lord, help," when straightway a warm breath from above rekindled it. The evil spirit blew it out again; another swift prayer and the warm breath again rekindled it. And so on until she reached the oratory. It is the parable of an earnest life. We are on the way to heaven. The night is dark. Pray without ceasing. Depend on the lantern only so long as the light is in it from above.

So at last heaven's gate will be reached. Once there, no more sin, no more struggling, no more bewilderment at the cross-roads. Jacob wrestled all night. He had to reckon with God as well as with his brother. Having done that, God went with him to his wronged brother and all was well. The struggle goes on within until we know our own weakness and the strength of God.



XXIX

GOOD OUT OF NAZARETH

Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?
—JOHN 1:46.

AND why not? It was a town so beautiful for situation that it was called "a pearl in a casket of emeralds." It stood in a fruitful valley in the Galilean highways, encircled in a belt of rounded hills. In the foreground were gardens enclosed by cactus hedges, with here and there a pasture, or a grain field, or a grove of venerable olive-trees. Beyond, beyond, and yet beyond were the everlasting mountains: the long range of Carmel traversed by the shadows of the hurrying clouds; Gilead, with its rugged limestone cliffs; Hermon, crowned with a green garland, and towering aloft, like Saul, among the prophets.

If the religion of nature were sufficient, surely those who lived in the midst of this beauty of the valleys and this sublime glory of the mountains should have been distinguished for holy character.

Alas! it was not so. The people of Nazareth "were sinners above all the Galileans." Nazareth was a hissing and a byword, proverbial for wickedness. "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?"

This fair question received a fair answer: "Come and see."

Come and see what? Jesus Christ, the best thing heaven or earth ever saw.

Nazareth was not a good place for the training of one intending to build up character and make his life tell.

I. THERE WAS SO LITTLE ROOM

It was shut in among the mountains. It seemed scarcely a part of the noisy world.

Many a country youth is impatient of his limited surroundings. He longs for a larger place. He wants to be in the turmoil of the madding crowd.

But there is much to be said in favor of cramped environments.

Look, for example, at the lonely exile of Patmos. John may have gazed longingly toward the west, where the Roman Christians had large scope for their abilities. Or he may have looked toward the east, where his brethren were laboring in the populous city of Ephesus. John was "cribbed, cabined, and confined." But God spoke to him there, and through him to the world.

It was so also with Madam Guyon in the Bastile. But all God's people are grateful for the song she sang there:

> "A little bird am I,
> Shut in from fields of air;
> But in my cage I sit and sing
> To Him who placed me there;
> Well pleased a prisoner to be
> Since, O my God! it pleaseth thee."

John Bunyan's dungeon illuminated the world. The secret of all narrow or wide places is to be *useful* and to make the *best* of what is.

When Louis XIV. asked Colbert why, with all the resources of his kingdom, he had not conquered that little country by the Zuyder Zee, he replied: "The people are so much greater than their land."

If our field of usefulness is narrow, be sure that we fill it. Don't complain.

II. NAZARETH WAS NO PLACE FOR EQUIPMENT

The boy Jesus doubtless longed for better facilities. There were the famous schools of Athens—the Garden, the Academy, the Painted Porch. There was the splendid university of Alexandria, where Greek and Oriental culture were taught; and down in Jerusalem were the rival schools of Hillel and Shammai. But this lad must remain in Nazareth, the humble cottage for his university, the Old Testament Scriptures for his library, and Mary his only teacher, unless, perchance, he was permitted between his tasks to attend the rabbinical school.

The ambition of an American boy is to go to college.

Sometimes, however, boys without a college education develop into thorough men.

In Spencer County, Indiana, in 1816, there was a lad transported with delight because of an offer of six dollars a month for rowing the ferry over Anderson's Creek. He bought Plutarch's "Lives" with his first earnings. He read these in the early mornings by the light of a pine torch. He had but one year's schooling altogether; yet he became a liberally educated man, and finally steered the Ship of State through the troubled sea of the Civil War.

All worthy men are self-made men. The only difference is that some work out their destiny with slenderer materials than others.

In a recent Japanese exhibit was a pagoda carved out of ivory. It was not more beautiful than other products of Oriental art, yet it attracted general attention because it had been carved with a bent nail.

In the great university of On a lad was envied because he was the adopted son of Pharaoh's daughter. He became very learned, but he got his working capital down in the desert of Midian. Here, watching flocks of sheep, he looked on the mountains about him, the starry heavens above him, through long days of meditation in the still pastures. Then he was permitted to behold the miracle of the burning bush and the solitude broken by the voice of God. And all this experience is what really made the great man Moses.

III. JESUS FOUND NO PATRONAGE IN NAZARETH

His townsmen did not sympathize with Him. His brethren did not believe in Him. He had only the confidence of His mother. But He plodded on and kept His own counsel.

In a little town in Germany a lad was born with a soul for music. His father combined the diverse occupations of barber and surgeon to the Elector of Saxony. He intended his son to study law. With the complicity of his aunt the boy smuggled a weak-voiced spinet into his attic, and there he spent his solitary hours. At eight years of age he was taken by his father for a visit to the castle of Saxe-Weissenfels. While his father was conversing with the duke, he stole away to the chapel. When they sought him there he sat upon the organ stool, like a brownie with dangling feet, in a very heaven of melody. In after years he wrote the oratorio of "The Messiah."

So the noblest spirits sometimes flourish in uncongenial soil. Potted plants have to be content with small stature. Trees boxed up and coddled never amount to much. The oak takes care of itself; it grasps the rock and subsi-

dizes the soil; it throws out its mighty arms to wind and tempests—

> "Hurrah for the oak, the brave old oak!
> Who stands in his pride alone;
> And still flourish he, a hale green tree,
> When a hundred years are gone."

Character is bred amid storms. Noble souls in cramped-up Nazareths!

IV. THERE WERE ADVERSITIES IN NAZARETH

Jesus was poor. He knew what affliction meant; for it would appear that Joseph died during this period. Home was left desolate. It was a Jewish custom in such a case for the oldest son to provide for the family.

Trials are profitable.

The rough diamond cried out under the blow of the lapidary: "I am content, let me alone."

But the artizan said, as he struck another blow: "There is the making of a glorious thing in thee."

"But every blow pierces my heart!"

"Ay; but after a little it shall work for thee a far more exceeding weight of glory."

"I can not understand," as blow fell upon blow, "why I should suffer in this way."

"Wait; what thou knowest not now, thou shalt know hereafter."

And out of all this came the famous Koh-i-noor to sparkle in the monarch's crown.

Then there was the hard work for Jesus in the shop.

Poor outlook for ambition this!

But wait patiently and see what will become of it all.

Hard conditions sometimes oppress the noblest of

minds. The pathetic story of Charles Lamb and his sister Mary is a familiar one. In a fit of frenzy Mary killed her mother. From that moment Charles gave up his fondest dreams and took care of her. When she felt the spasms of insanity coming upon her, they would go arm in arm to the asylum at Hoxton, both weeping as they went, and he carrying the strait-jacket in his hand. A hundred pounds was his annual income, and for forty years he shared it with her. Here was a simple, uneventful life, yet splendidly heroic.

Jesus for our sakes became poor.

V. SIN WAS THE DISCOURAGING FEATURE IN NAZARETH

The air was filled with the discordant sounds of blasphemy and uncleanness.

Altho Jesus was in Nazareth, He was not of it.

A man may be superior to his environment. As some one has said, we may not hinder the bird flying over our head, but we can prevent it building its nest in our hair.

Jesus had the advantage of us in that He was Divine. Sin has invaded our nature, yet it may be overcome by spiritual growth.

1. *Calvary meets sin and destroys it.*—Before Calvary was reached Jesus symbolized our condition by the destruction of darkness in blind Bartimeus's eyes. It was almost worth while being blind to experience the change that took place. What a glory was revealed to the man! What wonderment! What ecstacy of soul! He saw the hillsides, the heavens above him, and, more than all, the face of Jesus. Here was a new world opened to him. His wildest imaginings were realized. When Calvary destroys our spiritual darkness, heavenly light takes its

place; and then is revealed that new life in a new world of experience that must be felt to know it.

2. *Triumph over sin.*—When Pompey returned from his Eastern conquests there was a line of barbaric kings who, in chains, were dragged at his chariot wheels. So at last we will triumphantly go to heaven's gate dragging our lusts and passions and vanquished habits in chains.

As a reward we have the promise of the white stone, the new name upon it, the tree of life, and a place on the throne beside the King.

"Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" *Jesus* is the answer.

Meanwhile, adversity, suffering, trial, affliction, bereavement, are all made tributary to ideal character under the control and guidance of this marvelous man of Nazareth.

XXX

SAUL AT THE WITCH'S CAVE

> Then said Saul unto his servants, Seek me a woman that hath a familiar spirit, that I may go to her, and inquire of her. And his servants said to him, Behold, there is a woman that hath a familiar spirit at En-dor.
>
> —I. SAMUEL XXVIII: 7.

THERE is little vital character in the ordinary photograph, because it is taken at a single sitting. The composite photograph of pictures taken at different ages gives the best impression of the real man. The true character of Saul appears at different periods of his life.

We get the first glimpse of him on the mountain seeking strayed animals from the farm. He is good-looking, and reminds us of John Ridd in "Lorna Doone." Coming across the prophet Samuel, he makes inquiry of him. Samuel tells him that they are found. He tells him also that Israel would have him for their king.

We next see him at college. He gets polished. His character is changed—as we would say, converted. He had a noteworthy experience coming down the mountain when the Spirit of the Lord came upon him.

Next at Mizpeh. It was election day. Saul was elected, and all the people shouted, "God save the King!"

His first kingly act was when he led the army against the Ammonites and won a remarkable victory.

He then took his proper place in the palace. He was just, resolute, and ruled in equity.

His cabinet consisted of Samuel as chaplain, Abner as secretary of war, Abiathar as high priest, and David as lieutenant and confidential friend. His reign for a time was satisfactory and successful.

A change takes place. He gives way to his passions and eccentric impulses. He became envious and jealous, cruel and vindictive. He tried to kill David and massacred priests. He seemed possessed of an evil spirit, for he rejected Divine counsels and admonitions.

His conduct brought on a national crisis. The Philistines appear on the old battle-ground of Esdraelon. The king is perplexed. What now of his prized counsellors? Saul is dead, Abiathar has gone away from him. The priests, outraged at the massacre of their brethren, have forsaken him. The chill shadow of coming disaster has fallen upon him. He can not go into this battle with Divine support, so he seeks a witch to direct him. What a change from God to a witch! And what a lamentable decay of character! But so it ever has been and ever will be when people leave God out of their plans and take things into their own hands.

What is the lesson for us? Notice:

I. THE PROBATIONARY CHARACTER OF LIFE

Saul was on trial. As king he had tasks to perform and responsibilities to meet. For the discharge of these he required certain gifts and endowments. God provided both. If God was ever patient with any man He was with Saul. Saul had wise counsellors, who warned and entreated. He had a fair chance of success.

So have we all. A fighting chance! No more, no less. Circumstances are mostly against us. But it is a mark of true greatness to rise superior to environment.



To triumph means character and usefulness; to yield, loss of manhood and exile from God.

II. OBEDIENCE

This is the touchstone of spiritual success. The better life excludes sinfulness.

Saul was determined to have his own way. He had it, and with it ruin.

The turning-point in his life was when he disobeyed God in the campaign against the Amalekites. He obeyed in part only, and told his chaplain a lie about it. A small beginning; but oh! what a wide and destructive ending!

The beginning of a better life is obedience through and through. "My son, give me thine heart." All or nothing! No wilfulness nor reservation of mind, no half-heartedness. "Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it."

III. GRIEVING THE SPIRIT

We grieve our friends by repeated slights, affronts, and inattentions. This is likely to end in separation. Our best friend is the Holy Spirit. He is grieved when we refuse His invitations and admonitions. Habitual disobedience, worldliness, neglect of duty, and persistence in sin grieve Him. And what is the outcome of it? Coldness of heart, discomfort, self-accusation, and departure further and further from God; then misery and hopelessness. Like Saul, we feel forsaken and alone.

IV. RELIGIOUS DECLINE

We must have some sort of religion. The soul craves it. If not God, then the Witch of En-dor. If not the sanctuary, then the cave. The soul's thirst must be

slaked at "the river of life" or at the pools by the wayside.

Whither in our wandering? To atheism? The fool only says "There is no God."

To rationalism? As well take no chart on the voyage as no revelation to the next life. It is like a man lost on the prairie with no landmarks anywhere, without a foot-print except his own.

To agnosticism? We begin by doubting and end by saying: "I don't know. There may be a God, but I can not see him; a future life, but no one has come back to tell us about it; a true revelation, but there's a difference of opinion. I am not wise enough to decide." So we find ourselves like the eyeless fish of the cave that have nothing but scars to show that they once could see.

To some form of superstition? Saul was a spiritualist. Danger lies that way.

I had a schoolmate once, the son of a clergyman, taught by a Christian mother to receive the simple truths of the Gospel, who, as time passed, followed his own inclinations and went into the witch's cave. He deemed himself a profound thinker, and asserted that he had found a philosophy better than that of the Gospel. He finished his course by assassinating President Garfield. He excused himself by saying that he was under the control of a supernatural influence.

The danger-point is at the divergence of the paths. The star that swings out of its orbit a single inch is lost forever in infinite space. God, the Bible, the Holy Spirit mark the appointed route of a Christian life.

The Christian system is like a chain: lose a link and the chain is broken. We do not believe at all if we believe with a reservation. Oh, the folly of it, to place

one's own heart and reason over against Divine authority!

What an ending was King Saul's! On the heights of Gilboa he meets the Philistines. He is in the midst of a shower of arrows, desperation in his face, despair in his heart. He was driven up the hill, and there he stood at bay. His three sons had been slain, his armor-bearer lay dead at his feet; he leaned heavily on his spear, weak from the loss of blood from a self-inflicted wound. He reeled and fell. Next morning his armor was fastened above the pagan altar of Ashtaroth, and his headless body impaled on the walls of Beth-shan, like a captured bird of prey.

A picture by an American artist in the Luxembourg attracted great attention. It was called "The Return." A wanderer in rags and tatters has come home. In hopeless anguish he kneels by the side of a high bed whereon his father lay dead. Too late! too late! It is not true, the Father never dies.

Then get back to the first love, to covenant vows, to the old-fashioned Book, and to communion with an all-wise and forgiving God; for His hands are stretched out wide to receive all who come.

"I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked."

XXXI

ESTHER IN SHUSHAN

I will go unto the king.

—ESTHER iv: 16.

NOTABLE dignitaries pass before us as in a panorama; King Ahasuerus, known to us as Xerxes the Great, who lashed the sea because it would not obey him; Esther, the beautiful queen and savior of a nation; Haman, the villian who was court favorite for a while; Mordecai, the mighty pleader.

There is lamentation among the Jews. They are to be slain wherever found. The time is set for the fearful slaughter.

Mordecai, uncle of the queen, attracts her attention and informs her of the coming calamity, and urges her interference. Vain are her protestations. The king is at his revels. To approach him uninvited is death. No matter; the fate of a nation depends upon her. "Who knoweth but thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" She pleads, resists, and yields. "I will go in unto the king, and if I perish I perish."

The hour is come. She dresses herself in her royal robes, commits herself into the hands of a good and just God, approaches the banqueting-hall, hesitates at the door, then, with a courage befitting the occasion, enters. The courtiers are amazed, but the king could not resist one beautiful as an angel. He holds out the golden scepter and says: "What wilt thou, Queen Esther? It

shall be done unto thee, even to the half of my kingdom." The crisis is past. Israel is saved!

What does this mean to us? The glory of *intercession*. All men without Christ are under the sentence of death. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die."

Observe:

I. THE SUPPLIANT QUEEN

Noble attitude! Personal salvation is all important. Do the first thing first. Then seek the salvation of others. The Publican sought salvation on bended knee and cried: "God be merciful to me, a sinner." He was saved. The scarred hands of Jesus are stretched out to all such.

If this were all, religion would be a selfish thing. The captain of the *Algona*, discharged from service, is hiding shamefaced somewhere. His ship went down, and forty-eight of his crew and passengers went down with it; but he swam ashore! Even tho a man may come to heaven in that way, he is saved as by fire. No sheaf from the harvest. No star in the crown.

We have power to convert. Stupendous thought! "He that converteth a sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death." How?

1. *By seasonable words.*

2. *By example.*

3. *By intercessory prayer.*—Moses was never so great as when on his knees. "This people have sinned . . . forgive them." Nor Hezekiah, when he begged for the deliverance of his people from Sennacherib. Nor Paul—"I wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren." Listen at the door of John Knox and hear him cry: "Give me Scotland or I die." Wives, save your husbands. Parents, save your children. Young men, save your comrades. Friend, save your neighbor.

II. THE OUTSTRETCHED SCEPTER OF THE KING

God is as willing to answer prayer as this Persian king. We pray for ourselves with faith, for our friends with misgiving.

1. *We are encouraged by great promises.*—No limitations are put on prayer. "Ask and it shall be given you." Rizpah sat with bludgeon in hand and fire in heart to keep off the beasts of the field from devouring the bodies of her sons. Why not watch for spiritual enemies and ward them off from the souls Christ came to save?

2. *We are encouraged from the life of Christ.*—He granted the request of Jairus and restored his daughters; of the Syrophenician woman—"Be it unto thee even as thou wilt"; of the four friends who brought the paralytic to Him, for He healed the man and forgave his sins; of the widow of Nain, whose tears were her prayers, for her dead son came back to life. Did any one ever come to Him without healing? "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever."

3. *We are encouraged from His own intercessory prayer.*—What were His outstretched hands on the cross but intercessory prayer? What is He doing now at the right hand of God but interceding as an advocate for His people?

A legend says that the angel Sandalphon waits at the outermost gates of heaven with his feet on a ladder of light, listening. The songs of the multitude within do not tempt him. Music and laughter are all about him, yet he heeds them not. But he does hear the mother's cry for her wayward son, the sob of a burdened, bleeding heart, and bears them aloft, lays them before the throne, and they turn to garlands at the feet of God.

III. THE SEQUEL

Haman is hanged. The Israelites are saved. One home is in mourning. Multitudes of other homes are filled with music and laughter. Joy follows in the wake of toil and prayer.

Jesus said that it was His meat and drink to do the will of His Father. He proved the truth of this saying at the well of Sychar. Weary, hungry, and thirsty, He sat on the curb of the well. A woman came to draw water. He forgot His fatigue, His hunger, and His thirst to save that woman. The townspeople came out to hear Him, and there was a wonderful change in Samaria after that. The nobler passion had gotten the upper hand. The joy of the Lord makes a heaven on earth.

At the close of the Civil War, when Lincoln visited Richmond, the slaves loosed the horses from his carriage and drew it through the streets, crying, "God bless Massa Lincoln!" There were men among them whose backs were scarred in a lifetime of bondage, and he was their deliverer. So Christ came to give liberty to the captive and the opening of the prison doors to them that are bound.

It would be a pitiable sight to stand at heaven's gate and see a man going in all alone. Himself saved, but no souls from all the multitude below brought along with him. Saved, but no trophies for faithfulness. On the other hand, what a contrast when one comes in greeted with halleluiahs and warm hand-shaking!

Let us cease our selfishness and busy ourselves with soul saving. It will pay both here and hereafter.

XXXII

BUSINESS

Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?

—LUKE ii: 49.

EVERY man must have some occupation in order to be honest and true to himself.

Jacob was able to tell Pharaoh what his business was.

Jonah, when caught in a storm at sea, had nothing to do, therefore, got into trouble.

Jesus could say that He got His living as a carpenter, but His chief business was to do His Father's will.

The Christian should be able to speak in the same way.

Sydney Smith spoke derisively of William Carey as the "consecrated cobbler;" but Carey said of himself that it was true that he cobbled shoes for a living, but his real business was to serve Christ.

1. *Understand the relation of spiritual things to secular.*

We too often waste our energy on secular affairs, and put God off with what Shakespeare calls "our superfluus." We tire ourselves out, and then excuse ourselves accordingly from the larger duties of life. Whereas, the injunction is, "First seek the Kingdom of God."

2. *Understand your personal relation to the Kingdom.*—Much is said against the poor, backsliding, indolent, ignorant Church. Man, let the Church alone and look to yourself! The Church is just what such as you and I make it. There is gold enough in Klondike for all

seekers; the thing to do is for each to get his portion of it.

A theological student at Andover went to his professor to inquire for some one to saw his wood for him; the professor offered to do it. To succeed, a man must saw his own wood, hold his own plow-handles. You can not farm out your responsibility to the ministers and the elders.

Now, with a clear understanding of our business, let us observe the maxims applied to common industry:

I. BE PROMPT

Operatives are prompt at the ringing of the factory bells. How is it at the ringing of the church bells? An overcast sky will suffice as an excuse to keep some people from church.

Politicians and bank directors are on hand at the hour appointed. Why not at church? At prayer-meeting? At the business sessions of the church? Why should the Sunday-school teacher play fast and loose with his responsibility? Why should the world be imperative and the church subjunctive?

II. BE ENTHUSIASTIC

The enthusiast in business is the winner. The same enthusiasm displayed by the Christian would be called fanaticism. Christ was too busy to eat, tho hungry, at the well. He was saving a soul.

So Paul. Tho pressed with chains and a prisoner, he sought the salvation of his judges. Good fishermen do not sit idly by when the Master says, "Let down your nets." Were Christians enthusiasts their sincerity would not be doubted.

III. BE IN HASTE

The King's business requires it. In the time of King Henry III. letters bore the picture of a post-boy swinging from a gallows tree, with the legend: "Haste, post, haste for thy life." Christians bear a message of tremendous import, and should not loiter on the way.

Among Moody's converts in London were two brothers who consulted as to the third, who lived in Queenstown. They sent a despatch: "Come at once; business of great importance." When he arrived, they gave him no peace till he, too, accepted Christ. This is business.

IV. BE DELIBERATE

John Wesley used to say: "Let me be ever in haste, but never in a hurry." The fire department answers the alarm with alacrity. In the multitude of affairs take time to pray, to read the Bible, and to meditate. It will prepare you for all matters of importance, and to make the most of your opportunity. Nothing is gained by being fussy. Impetuosity is a hindrance always.

V. BE PRACTICAL

Voltaire said of his friend La Harpe: "He is like an oven always hot, yet never cooking anything." Castles in the air are of no account. You can not live in them.

> "Are you in earnest? Seize this very minute!
> What you can do, or dream you can, begin it."

VI. BE PROGRESSIVE

A successful man is never satisfied. He stretches out Briarean hands for more.

The last man in the world to be satisfied is the Chris-

tian. So much to be done! So many doors open for service!

Add one Christian grace to another daily. Aim at promotion. There is always room at the top. The rabbis say that an angel came to Methuselah, commanding him to build a house for himself, since he had five hundred years yet to live. He replied: "If I am to live only five hundred years, it is scarcely worth while to build a house."

Move on and up. Be better to-morrow than to-day.

VII. BE PERSISTENT

Hold on! Hold fast! Hold out! Brush discouragement aside. Faith is the mother of patience, and this virtue is needed in work. Christopher Wren was sickly when a lad, and the doctors said that he would not live long. But he had conceived the idea of building a cathedral. In his young imagination he saw the fabric completed. He could not die till he had realized his hopes. For thirty-five years his frail body lived on hope; then St. Paul's was finished. This is to live. This is success. All else is failure. "Be thou faithful over a few things and I will make thee ruler of many things." "Come up higher."

XXXIII

CHOOSING A FRIEND

He that hath friends must show himself friendly; and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.

—PROVERBS xviii: 24.

THE new version has it: "He that maketh many friends doeth it to his own destruction." Christ said the same thing in another form: "Woe unto you when all men speak well of you." The downright man, however, has enemies as well as friends.

Carlyle says: "Popularity is as a blaze of illumination kindled round a man, showing what is in him, not putting the slightest more item into him, often abstracting much from him, conflagrating the poor man himself into ashes, and *caput mortuum*."

It used to be the custom in Yale College to elect nine members from each class as "Cochleaureati" by reason of personal popularity; these in turn elected the "best fellow" of their number to receive the "wooden spoon."

The desire for popularity often leads to the quagmire of an ignoble life. It is more important to be a square man than a good fellow.

But we should have friends. For lack of them we grow morose, apathetic, and unprofitable. A strong character may rise above it possibly, like the frontiersman who appeared at the door of the White House, and when some one cried, "Make way for Colonel Crockett!"

pushed the page aside, saying, "David Crockett makes way for himself!"

Wordsworth, when in solitude at Rydal Mount, showed distinct loss of power.

Nowhere are friends more necessary than in the city. Men come and go along the great thoroughfares, and are no more to each other than flies on the wall. Each seem to be saying, "I care for nobody and nobody cares for me."

The Church should lead in showing itself friendly. It was a just word dropped into the minister's box after he had preached a sermon on "Recognition of Saints in Heaven," which suggested that he preach on the "Recognition of Saints on Earth."

> "Friends are like melons. Shall I tell you why?
> To find one good, you must a hundred try."

True friendship rests on four pillars:

I. MUTUAL RESPECT

1. *Select with regard to character.*—One who is addicted to vice, falsehood, dishonesty, foul speech, or any unholy life is not worthy of our confidence. One drop of iodine will color a tumbler of the purest water. He who will fool another will fool me.

Alexander was forewarned that his physician had put poison in his medicine. He put the note under his pillow, sent for his physician, and drank the cup in his presence. That was confidence. That was true friendship.

The fabulous Circe had a garden open to passers-by. To her guests she offered a sweet potion which transformed them into dogs and swine and all manner of four-footed and creeping things. This morning on my way

to church I passed a group of young men, one of whom was telling a story. I heard enough of it to inform me that I was passing Circe's garden.

2. *Select from among our betters.*—To choose from beneath may be magnanimous, but it is dangerous.

I once saw ivy climbing up the ruins of an ancient castle at Innisfallen. It found its way through door and lattice, until, displacing stone from stone, it towered, as if in triumph, over the dilapidated structure. Ruin lies in the way of questionable friendships.

II. MUTUAL SYMPATHY

I came down the German Molkenkur at sunset and turned aside in the forest to see the crimson glory. The Rhine and the Neckar, coming together far below, looked like rivers of blood. The tiles of Heidleberg glowed like gold, and earth and heaven were bathed in splendor. I said aloud, unconsciously, "Wonderful!" A voice behind said, "Schön! Schön!" I turned and saw a tall Saxon, a court painter, who like myself was lost in wonder at the scene. A common chord had been struck between us as we walked together down the mountain in the gathering gloom. A brief but real friendship. Years have passed since then, but the memory is sweet.

"A fellow feeling makes us wondrous kind." Christian friendship is the best. Here runs the cleavage that divides the world.

"What a friend we have in Jesus!" Christ is an incomparable friend. He is all and in all. Unchangeable. His true followers are our friends. This is friendship at its best. It is seen in the two disciples walking to Emmaus.

"Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers"

was not written with special reference to wedlock, but to all the relations of Christian life.

III. MUTUAL HELPFULNESS

1. *Don't choose a melancholy man for a friend.*—Such a one thinks the times out of joint and everything is going to the bad.

I would rather spend a cheery hour with Dick Swiveller carrying his flute under his arm and humming, "Away with melancholy!" than a day among the misereres of the Capuchins.

2. *Don't choose a flatterer.*—My friend must be ingenuous and frank. A trait of friendship is candid reproof. Bluntness is not friendship.

Brush off a venomous insect from the face, but don't do it with a sledge-hammer. It is kind to take a mote from the eye, but not with hot pincers.

A traveler in the mountains of Madeira had a guide who, as they journeyed up steep hills and through the darkness, kept calling: "Press on, señor, I can see light yonder!" Give encouragement in the hour of darkness and lend a hand in time of need.

3. *Friendship is mutual.*—The service must not be one-sided. Give and take. "He is my friend who brings grist to my mill."

A veteran of Balaklava fell, wounded in both knees. His bunk-mate cried: "Climb up and I will carry you off!" But, clinging to his comrade's back, he noticed that his rescuer was bleeding from a mortal wound. Whereupon he begged him to put him down. But the faithful comrade refused, bore him off, and, staggering, fell dead. Thus true friends serve each other.

IV. STEADFASTNESS

In classic mythology friendship is represented as a young man, bare headed, in tattered garments, having on his forearm the inscription: "*Vivere et mori*"; on his forehead: "*Æstate et hieme*"; and on his breast: "*Prope et longe.*" Ay, this is the oath of the covenant: For Life and Death, for Summer and Winter, Near and Far!

Fair-weather friends vanish when we most need them. Not so the "friend that sticketh closer than a brother." "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends"; but "while we were yet enemies, Christ died for us." How constant His love! He knew that Thomas would doubt and Peter deny, that all would forsake him; yet he loved them to the end.

Make His acquaintance. You will need Him—

(*a*) When you come to the border-land.

(*b*) When at the great assize.

Claim His friendship NOW.

Take the stretched-out hand!



XXXIV

BIRDS OF PASSAGE

> Yea, the stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times; and the turtle and the crane and the swallow observe the time of their coming; but my people know not the judgment of the Lord.
>
> —JEREMIAH viii: 7.

"I AM sure," said a friend, "that I heard the chirp of a robin this morning." It is nothing new to be welcoming the harbinger of spring. "When the swallows homeward fly" was sung by Anacreon five hundred years before Christ. Homer celebrated the return of the water-fowl to the rivers of Asia. Solomon mingles his welcome to the birds with his wooing of the Shulamite: "My beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away; for . . . the time of the singing of birds is come."

The arrival of birds is always on schedule time. We say, "One swallow does not make a summer." But it does; that is, it makes assurance doubly sure. Not more certain do summer people return to their homes from seaside or mountain than the feathered tribes come back in their appointed season to attend to repairs and housecleaning. So punctual are they that some Indian tribes have named their recurring moons after the migratory birds.

Birds never lose their way. Professor Newton, of Cambridge, says: "In the migration of birds we are brought

face to face with the greatest mystery in the animal kingdom."

How are they guided? Not by vision; for notwithstanding the marvelous power of the bird's eye, it can not pierce the darkness nor cover the course of so long a journey. That they have occult knowledge of the location of the magnetic pole is mere hypothesis. The view of Herr Palmen that they are guided by older birds which have had experience of the route is insufficient. It is true that wild geese fly in converging lines with one woodsman in front; but many others, like the skylarks, pursue their journey alone. To say that they are guided by instinct is an evasion, since instinct itself needs to be accounted for.

But we have to do with the home habits of birds so far as it touches the problems of life. And let me say, like the birds

I. WE CAME FROM GOD

"God created man in His own image." The Divine image is attested by his inner consciousness. He can think "God." He can say "God," love God, obey God, defy God, and reject God's mercy. These qualities differentiate him from all other orders of life. Sir William Hamilton says, "Man is not an organism; he is an intelligence served by organs." The same thought is elaborated by Theodore Parker: "The greatest star is that at the little end of the telescope—the star that is looking, not looked after nor looked at."

II. WE ARE A LONG WAY FROM HOME

Sin has alienated us from God. We are out in a far country as moral vagabonds. There is a pathetic response in every man to the legend of the wandering Jew.

There is this comfort that, however that image may be marred, a man does not lose it altogether. I look into the water on a windy day. I know that my image is there, but the rippling of the water distorts it. So the Divine image in man is blurred and obscured by the passions engendered by sin.

We are far, far from God, but we still bear tokens of our origin. Nor can we escape from His influence, fly as we may to the uttermost parts of the earth.

III. THE HOME INSTINCT IS STILL OURS

David's pilgrim, on his way back from Babylon, sings, "Return unto thy rest, O my soul." There is no rest except in God. "We came forth from Him," said Augustine, "and we are homesick until we return."

A legend tells how Jesus, on his visit to Jerusalem at twelve years of age, found several rabbis, known as the pillars of wisdom, sitting in the hall Gazith discussing the question, "Where shall rest be found?" One said, "In the abundance of this world." Another, "In the good opinion of our fellows." A third, "In present contentment with present conditions." A fourth, "In the enjoyment of simple pleasures." A fifth, "In doing good as we have opportunity." A sixth, "In self-respect founded on conscious virtue." Whereupon the fair-haired boy remarked that "none ever resteth until he findeth God." This is the true solution of the problem. By this thought we are stimulated to heavenward flight.

IV. THE WAY HOMEWARD IS CLEARLY MARKED OUT

God, who gives the aerial chart to birds, has provided a way for us. "If He so care for the fowls of the air, shall He not much more care for you, O ye of little

faith?" Isaiah said: "A highway shall be there . . . and it shall be called the way of holiness." But a greater than Isaiah declared of Himself: "I am the way"; and, further, "I go to prepare a place for you."

So, then, the soul returns to God, if ever, by the way of Calvary, the Royal way of the cross. "He that believeth hath everlasting life."

V. THERE ARE OPPOSING INFLUENCES

The chief one is *a free, refractory will.* Nothing in the whole realm of nature is opposed to the laws of its being but man. The lower orders have instinct. Instinct is bondage. Intelligence is freedom. Instinct yields to automatic assent to law, but reason may violate law. The head winds offer but a momentary hindrance to the flight of the returning birds which will rise above them in calmer air, but our will may make the homeward path an impossibility.

We think sometimes that our liberty is restrained by law; in fact, the law of our being is disannulled by the exercise of our liberty. We know our duty and do not do it.

The bobolink in the southern forests says: "March has come. The sun is shining. I must be off. The snow is melting in my nest a thousand miles away." No sooner said than done, and he is on the wing!

But how comes the voice to the prodigal in the far country? In the watches of the night he hears the sound of music and dancing afar off; shivering, he draws his rags about him, saying, "Fool that I am to linger here!" And still he lingers. The pangs of hunger, suggesting the abundance of his father's house, urge him to return, and still he dwells among the husks. He feels his lone-



liness, and his kinsfolk would welcome him home; but his stubborn will resists the summons. To-morrow, *to-morrow*, TO-MORROW! How slowly impulse rises to resolve! How long it takes a man to say, "I will arise and go!"

In the far north a lonely millard, in an ice-locked lake, was left behind while its companions were preening their feathers in pleasant summer streams. It strove to rise, and fluttered back; its wing was broken. Is there not some belated one here, some soul who, again and again, in passing years, has seen his friends set forth on the homeward journey while he was left behind? Has the time of his flitting not come? To you, belated one, weary and wandering, comes a Divine voice: "Return unto thy rest." The home instinct of Noah's dove came back to the Ark, and the good man put forth his hand and took her in. So the pierced hand of Jesus is held out at this moment to every weary, wandering one to draw him to a place of rest and peace.

XXXV

THE LOST OPPORTUNITY

And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee.
—Acts xxiv: 25.

FELIX was a worn-out epicure. Perhaps he wanted to experience a new sensation or to display his powers. At any rate Paul was called before him.

Paul was in chains. He was not impressive in appearance, yet of logical mind and eloquent tongue.

Caution whispered: "Take heed; don't offend that magistrate." Conscience said: "Quit you like a man." Caution again whispered: "A little harmless flattery may gain favor." Conscience replied: "Ambassador, bring that libertine to his knees; make him cringe before God."

Conscience got the victory, and "Felix trembled."

Paul spoke under three heads:

1 *Righteousness.*—A voice from within must have said: "Holy! holy! holy!" Another must have said: "Felix, thou art guilty."

2 *Temperance* (*i. e.*, *continence*).—Felix's shameless vices were of common fame. He looked into the face of Drusilla sitting beside him, his third unlawful queen; but the preacher went right on.

3 *Judgment to come.*—Felix's color changed, his eyes fell, his courage failed. It was like the scene in Belshaz-

Czar's palace. He moved uneasily, quailed before the merciless reasoning of the dim-eyed, stoop-shouldered, shackled prisoner. He trembled.

But this was the opportunity of Felix's life. Will he embrace it? He opens his lips; but the words he spoke were not those of the Philippian jailer. Will he beat his guilty breast and cry out, "God be merciful to me a sinner"? If so, there is mercy for him. The supreme moment has come. The fatal word goes forth, "Go thy way for this time. When I have a convenient season I will call for thee." The opportunity passes.

Observe:

I. FELIX POSTPONES DECISION

Not now. Some time in the future—the "convenient season."

Self-deception. Felix knew enough for the purpose in hand. He did not need to be a philosopher or theologian, a Kant or a Calvin, to accept Christ; nor a botanist like Linnæus, nor an astronomer like Galileo, nor an artist like Raphael.

He knew sin; his heart and conscience told him that. He knew that he must die and after that come to judgment. He knew that Christ had died on the cross to save sinners. All the essentials of Christianity were clear in his mind. God asks no more of a man than that he shall live up to the light he has.

II. FELIX WAS A BUSY MAN

He probably pleaded business cares as a reason for postponing decision for Christ. The office of procurator was no sinecure. The turbulent Jews gave him much trouble. He had his docket of pending cases to clear.

So many to-day plead exactions of life for putting off their salvation.

A child asked her mother, "Are you going to heaven?" "Yes, I hope so." "Then, mamma, I must be going, too, else it will be very, very lonesome for you." "But your father will be there." "No, mamma, he can not possibly leave the store." It was a juvenile paraphrase of the tares and wheat.

The folly of Æsop's simpleton, who stood by the flowing brook saying, "If this flows on it must empty itself and I shall go over dry shod," is obvious. The business of the world can wait, but the business of the soul can not.

III. FELIX'S LUCRE WOULD STAND IN THE WAY

His office was lucrative. He exacted tribute from every sheaf of wheat and basket of olives. His was the day of blackmail. Let us be charitable and suppose that he would get enough some day, and then stifle the cry of his conscience by endowing some good institution, and then at leisure make his peace with God.

The sophism is apparent. Call to mind the rich man who had an unusually abundant harvest, quite sufficient to justify him, in his own estimation, to retire and take his ease the rest of his days. The event that spoiled his plan was a sudden eviction that very night. A just eviction, too, since the tenant (for he was that and nothing more) had misused his trust. "So is he that layeth up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God."

IV. FELIX WAS NOT READY TO GIVE UP WORLDLY PLEASURE

He had a fine palace and great facilities for enjoyment. To him, probably, religion was a melancholy thing, fit

Only for old people and the afflicted. He would repent, of course, before he died. His refusal now was not final, only a postponement.

The reasoning is plausible, but false. Religion is not gloomy. "At God's right hand there are pleasures forevermore." It is a happy moment when a man's sins are forgiven. A truce, then a surrender, then peace!

"Oh, happy day that fixed my choice
On Thee, my Savior and my God!"

A sinner becomes the King's son, and sits in the King's banqueting-hall with all the King's nobility. "Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither hath it entered the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him."

The unsaved sinner is the one who has reason to be melancholy. Copper-miners in Cornwall, under the sea, can always hear the roll of the waves above them. But there are times when raging tempests drive them in terror from their tasks. The ungodly sometimes make merry within sound of the trumpet-blast of the judgment. They dare not stop to think. To sell heaven for a passing joy is a fool's bargain. A wise man once said: "Of laughter it is mad, and of mirth what doeth it?"

V. FELIX HOPED FOR POLITICAL PROMOTION

He was ambitious. He was unpopular with the Jews, but this was in his favor at Rome. He might become emperor. Who could tell? Stranger things had happened. To turn Christian would ruin his prospects. His duty was clear enough, but just now it stood in his way of personal elevation.

Did it pay Felix to postpone salvation for such a con-

sideration? "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole earth and lose his own soul?" A pleasure-yacht was sailing off the coast of Nova Scotia when an iceberg was sighted. It was suggested that as the day was fair and the sea quiet, the passengers might disembark upon it; a rather hazardous thing to do, but they succeeded in climbing the sides of the crystal mass. They remained there till sunset. Just as they got on board the ship again, the iceberg, as if by magic, fell asunder and dissolved. Its domes and pinnacles, crimsoned by the setting sun, disappeared like the fabric of a vision, leaving not a vestige behind. So will pass away the glory of this world, its thrones and dynasties, its honors and emoluments—all vanish with life's setting sun.

Only *character* endures. He is the wise man who wins character.

VI. FELIX LOVED SIN

That was back of all. He would not give up Drusilla, his eighteen-year-old beauty. She had been the wife of Azizus, King of Emesa, who was still living.

Back of all our excuses is sin. We fondle it like a tiger's cub, knowing at the same time the danger of the first taste of blood. Sin smiles, and is our master. It grows in strength, and the danger increases with the passing days. We do not wait for judgment. Sentence is passed already. The verdict is death. Manton says: "Whoso delayeth repentance leaveth his soul in pawn to the evil one, saying in effect, 'Here, Satan, keep my soul; if I fetch it not again by such a day 'tis thine forever.'"

Delays are manifest:

1. *Death may come at any moment.*

2. *Habit, like a serpent, will coil around the soul.*—Conscience, like the blacksmith's arm, which at first shrank from the heat and quivered with pain, now bares it to the shoulder and, unshrinking, thrusts it into a shower of sparks.

3. *The Spirit may cease to strive.*—That is fatal and beyond all recovery. "My Spirit shall not always strive with man." God is patient, but He will not be mocked.

VII. FELIX TREMBLED

The iron had gone into his soul. He was not like some who excuse themselves on the ground of a lack of feeling.

You say, "I have no vivid conviction of sin; I can hear the dropping of blood on Calvary and not let fall a tear; I do not turn pale at the thought of judgment." Was there not a time when you did? Once a sermon alarmed you; you lay awake at night; you struggled. That is all over now, and it takes something unusual to move you. You can sleep with no fear or scruple.

But salvation is more a matter of duty than of feeling. You owe an honest debt. Do you refuse to pay it for want of feeling?

Are you waiting a "convenient season"? When? To-morrow? The Spanish say, "The road to By-and-By leads to the house of Never." To-day is yours; to-morrow is God's. "To-day if ye will hear His voice." Are you waiting till the hour of death? Surely not. If so, you take fearful chances. Of all excuses this is the most cowardly. You would rake the field, squander the wheat of life on your passions, and fling the riddlings at the altar! Burn the candle to the socket, and then throw the snuff in the face of God! Is that it? Is it manly?

God's promise centers on the moment. The Oriental tell of a man who watched at the gates of Paradise a thousand years to have them open to admit him. Then for a moment he dozed, and awoke to find that they had opened and shut. It is a parable of lost opportunity.

So far as we know, the impression made upon the mind of Felix wholly passed away. He remained two years in the palace of Cæsarea, and was then deposed. His downfall seemed to begin from that time. His inaction was his ruin.

People are moved to tears in the rehearsal of a tragedy, then return to the world and live as if nothing had moved them. So the religious impression at this moment may pass as a dream.

The issues of eternity may depend upon this hour. Felix lost his opportunity. Will you lose yours?

XXXVI

THE LOGIC OF EVENTS

A Missionary Sermon

> O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times?
>
> —MATTHEW xvi:3.

IT is our business to interpret signs. He is a poor skipper who, trusting to his compass, makes no observations. He is a poor ranchman who does not round up his cattle when the storm is coming on. He is a poor reader of the newspapers who can not dream dreams and see visions between the lines. I saw a bunch of wild violets in the hands of a little maid, and presently the verdant forests and blooming fields were all before me.

The duty of the hour is suggested by current events.

At the time Christ spoke the words of our text a great crisis had come in the history of the Jewish nation. The leaders did not see it. Prophecy was fulfilled, but eyes were closed against it. They failed to discern the signs of the times.

There is a universal conviction that mighty events are before us in the opening of this new century.

The last century was marked by the introduction of new forces in spiritual and material things—steam and electricity, inventions and discoveries, and marvelous spiritual developments.

What are the signs to-day?

I. THE OPEN DOOR

Not of one, but of all nations. We do not pray any more for the open door, but rather that the people inside may be evangelized.

One hundred and sixty years ago William Carey, of Northamptonshire, desired to go as a foreign missionary; but he met with such opposition that he sailed in a Danish ship. On landing in India he supported himself by working in an indigo factory, meanwhile studying the Bengali language. Carey's original proposition was met with the cry, "Sit down, young man!" Everywhere the cry now is, "Rise up, young man, and go!"

In 1853 Japan opened its ports to commerce. Commodore Perry sailed in, and Japan is the Young America of the Orient. At this moment that people are discussing the question of substituting Christianity for their national religion.

It is less than thirty years since David Livingstone died on his knees in mid-Africa. But to-day the Dark Continent is cobwebbed by thoroughfares of commerce, slave-trade is practically abolished, and the Gospel is preached from Tanganyika to the Kongo and from the Nile to the Cape.

China is open. Until quite recently no railway could be built for fear of disturbing the historic rest of Fung-shui, the spirit of the past. A highway there is being cast up for the evangel.

So with other nations once closed against Christ. The fable of Aladdin before the cave, crying, "Open Sesame!" has been realized.

II. VOLUNTEERS FOR THE PROPAGANDA

There is no need now to pray for men and women to go to the front. More are ready than means at hand to send them.

Peter the Hermit created the enthusiasm for the foreign field. When Lincoln called for volunteers, the reply came from every quarter, "We are coming, Father Abraham, a hundred thousand strong." Two thousand of the best and brightest young men and women stand ready to enter the yellow fields and thrust in the sickle.

III. THE SUCCESS OF FOREIGN EVANGELIZATION

In the fifth century Patricius, a Scotchman, went over to Ireland and won over that barbaric people to Christ.

In the seventh century, Augustine, passing through the slave-market at Rome, saw a group of fair-haired Saxons on sale. On being told that they were "Angles" he remarked, "not Angles, but angels," and set forth to evangelize Britain.

In the eighth century Boniface carried the Gospel to Germany.

Then came the dark ages, which were followed, as a natural consequence of spiritual decline, by such men as Voltaire, Rousseau, and Thomas Paine.

After that the Church came to itself. The missionary epoch began with the nineteenth century. There are now seventy mission societies, three thousand five hundred missionaries in the field, with seven thousand five hundred native helpers, four millions of communicants, and an annual expenditure of fifteen millions to carry on the work.

At the beginning of the century just closed there were

two hundred millions of nominal Christians, now there are five hundred millions. What a sign of the times is this!

IV. THE CHURCH'S RETURN TO REASON

For centuries the Church expended much of her energy in formulating creeds and symbols. Perhaps this was necessary preparatory work.

It also spent much of it in polemics. That time has now gone by.

Bazaine surrendered one hundred and eighty thousand men at Metz. In his trial before the court-martial he pleaded: "We knew not what to do. We could not determine the source of authority. We were not sure as to the complexion of the government at Paris. We sat in council debating in vain." The president of the court interrupted again and again with the words, "But France, sir! What of France, sir?"

Is there not a suggestion here of the unwisdom of expending our energies on matters quite secondary to the pressing business of saving souls? "Seek ye *first* the Kingdom of God." This is no time for parley. The battle is on. The call of our Captain is: "Go forward!"

V. THE SPIKING OF THE ENEMY'S GUNS

The one great American infidel, the last of his kind, got his hearing from among curiosity mongers. He had no more influence among thoughtful people than if he had been a swallow in the chimney.

Max Müller said that aside from Christianity there were but two living religions: Mohammedanism and Buddhism. Mohammedanism represented war, slavery,

and polygamy. Buddhism, estimated at four hundred millions strong, is yielding to the light of civilization and Christian thought.

The only obstacle now to the progress of Christianity is within the Church itself. Some Christian teachers fail to see the trend of current events; others are indifferent, and their indifference rests in unbelief.

The world is at our feet if we did but believe and follow God's leadership.

Now let us apply all this, and

1. *Be aggressive.*—"Go ye." Go or send a substitute. No Christian is excused. "I will descend into the mine," said Carey, "if you will hold the rope." Have you aided to send some one to go to the front? Then stand by the rope.

"What did you see?" said Dr. Cook to a gunner who had fought at Waterloo. "Nothing but dust and smoke," was the answer. "And what did you do?" "I stood by my gun."

2. *Be generous.*—Give to the full measure of your ability.

Only ten cents per capita is given by Christians for foreign missions. The chariot-wheels are clogged. They are fast in the mire of avarice and parsimony. Dr. Duff said that we are playing at missions. Oh, for a baptism of the Holy Spirit!

The old historian, Diodorus, tells of a fire in the Pyrenees which burned off the forests and penetrated the soil until a stream of pure silver gushed forth and ran down the mountain side. This is a manifest fable. But there will be a more marvelous story to tell when the fire of God's Spirit begins to burn in the hearts of His people.

3. *Be prayerful.*—To your knees, O Israel! We pray

for ourselves, for our friends, for even our enemies. Let us now pray for Christ, that His Kingdom may come. If we do that in real earnest we shall never be the same men again. Nor will the Church be the same. Lord, let that time come! *Amen.*

XXXVII

AT THEIR WITS' END

And they are at their wits' end.
—PSALM cvii : 27.

THE context gives a vivid picture of a storm at sea. The winds and waves are roaring. The ship mounts up to heaven and plunges again into the depths. The crew reel to and fro like drunken men, and are at their wits' end.

What then? Why, "they cry to God, and He delivers them from all their distresses."

I have in mind seven persons who are at their wits' end:

I. THE MAN IN SEARCH OF TRUTH

The desire is sincere, but he is overwhelmed with doubt and in danger of downright unbelief. Trusting to his own wisdom, the inevitable has come. He is "at his wits' end." In childhood we have no doubts. All verities are near by. We reach for the stars as for flowers growing by the way. The rainbow is just yonder. The heavens are but the overhanging curtains of our playhouse. "Except ye become as little children ye shall in no wise enter the Kingdom of God."

But as years go by truths seem to recede. The stars, the rainbow, and the sky are farther off. We begin to inquire if there is a God. We reason and doubt and apply scientific processes to problems that can only be solved by faith.

The real conflict of the soul is when the Argonauts are

thus on their way to Colchis. On the open sea we are beaten about by contrary winds. We can manage the rigging, but not the elements. Vain is the hope of finding the Golden Fleece.

We are worsted when we meet the enemy on his own ground. Doubt yields to faith alone. Our unaided wits are at a disadvantage, but God's wisdom is infinite. Failing to appeal to that, doubt deepens to agnosticism, and agnosticism into the black midnight of unbelief. Socrates recognized the limitations of knowledge when he said: "I know only that I know little or nothing at all." Here we see the necessity of prayer. "If any man lack wisdom let him ask of God, who giveth to all men literally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him."

II. THE MAN UNDER THE CONVICTION OF SIN

All are sinners. There is a time when the consciousness of sin sweeps over the soul with the gathering force of a tempest; when a man feels the exceeding sinfulness of sin, is oppressed with a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and beats upon his breast in utter helplessness and confesses that he is at his wits' end.

It was so at the day of Pentecost. Did they do penance? Fire can not burn out guilt, nor scourging of the body expiate the sins of the soul. Did they plead good works? No; they threw up their hands and cried mightily to God.

It was so with David. When driven like a roe upon the mountains, and "at his wits' end," he appealed to a Power beyond his own. "This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him and saved him out of all his troubles."

It was so with the dying thief. "Lord, remember me!"

There is hope only in God:

III. THE MAN CONFRONTED WITH DUTY WHO CAN NOT DISCHARGE IT

This was Jonah's case. He pondered, questioned, and then resolved to meet his duty half way. He would not go to Nineveh, but he would go to Tarshesh. So he paid his fare, took ship, went down into the hold, and, having quieted his conscience, fell asleep. But the storm came, and every one on board was "at his wits' end." Jonah then depended upon God, who saved him and all the rest. "Salvation is of the Lord."

IV. THE MAN WHO FACES TEMPTATION

There is no escape from this. It will follow a man even to a hermit's cell. Habit has mastered him again and again. He has fallen. His fall teaches him his inability to stand in his own strength. He is discouraged, and comes to his wits' end. At this point hope enters. The boy shepherd went against his giant antagonist in the name of the Lord. Hence his victory. "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way of escape, that ye may be able to bear it."

V. THE MAN IN TROUBLE

"The heart knoweth its own bitterness."

Is the trouble jealousy and hate on the part of others? God was with the young men in the Babylonian fiery furnace. Is it poverty? The ravens fed the hungry prophet. Is it abandonment and loneliness? Jacob was visited at Bethel by the angels. Is it disappointment? Elijah, under the juniper-tree, flung himself down in de-

spair and wanted to die. But God met him, and Elijah lived to do the best work of his life after that. The old song pealed out:

"There isn't more night than day."

"The strength of God is made perfect in weakness." Our extremity is His opportunity.

VI. THE MAN IN TERROR OF DEATH

The black camel kneels at every hut. It is folly to put off preparation till the hour of starting on the journey.

A lad was taken on a long voyage by his father. He was homesick. As the ship sailed homeward he brightened day by day. On the night of entering the harbor the little fellow fell asleep. He was dimly conscious of the casting of the anchor and hearing many voices; then of being lifted in his father's arms and carried down the rope ladder into the little boat; then of the splashing of waves and beating of the oars; then, still half asleep, of being carried and laid in his little bed. Then he awoke and it was morning, and his mother's face was bending over him.

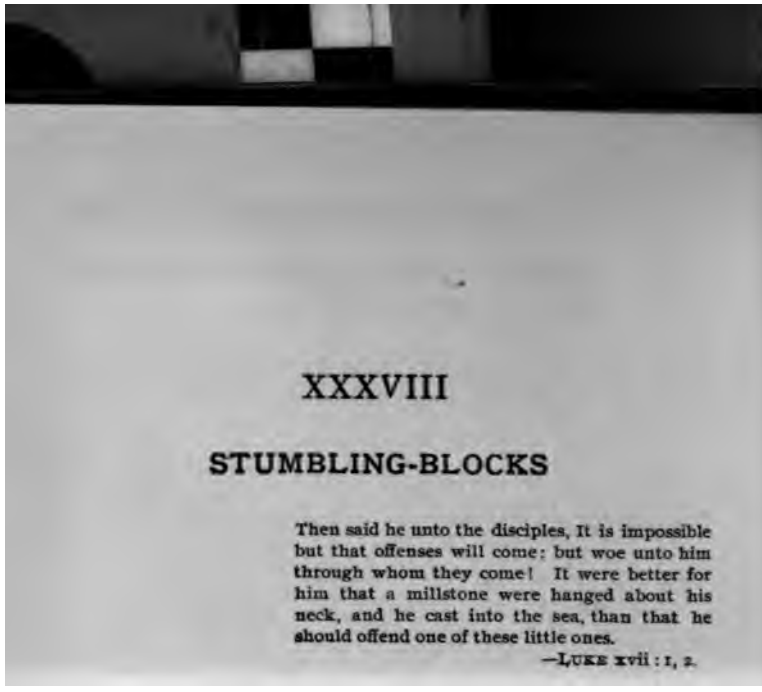
Such is death to those who are prepared for it.

VII. THE MAN WHO FEARS JUDGMENT

That is well grounded. All must plead guilty there. If anywhere, it is there he will be at his wits' end. There is only one way of quelling fear. That is, by quitting sin and accepting Christ as our substitute for sin. The penalty of violated law is death. Jesus died, and so paid the penalty for every believer. He is our lawyer, and in

pleading our case He claims that He met every demand upon the sinner by His own death on the cross. He said: "It is finished."

"O that man would praise the Lord for his goodness and for his wonderful works to the children of men."



XXXVIII

STUMBLING-BLOCKS

Then said he unto the disciples, It is impossible but that offenses will come: but woe unto him through whom they come! It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones.

—LUKE xvii: 1, 2.

THE original of "offense" is *skandalon;* hence our English word scandal. Its literal meaning is stumbling-block. Christ used it in reproving Peter: "Thou art an offense unto me."

The cross is referred to as a *skandalon*. It is to the Jews a stumbling-block and to the Greeks foolishness.

Christ is spoken of as a stone of stumbling. The application is to those who hinder people coming into the kingdom.

I. A MAN MAY BE AN OFFENSE TO HIMSELF

For example, a vicious temper, prejudice against truth and sound morals, a bad habit. He may therefore be his own worst enemy.

When Cranmer was tied to the stake in Oxford and the fagots were kindled, he thrust into the flame the hand that signed the recantation, saying, "O thou unworthy hand, thou shalt burn first."



II. A MAN MAY OFFEND THOSE OUT OF THE CHURCH

We are a watched people. The galleries in the stadium were crowded with witnesses. Eyes are upon us.

1. *We may assume overmuch righteousness.*—The Pharisees were guilty in this respect.

2. *We may be lawless.*—We offend when we do not pay our honest debts, when loose in our business transactions, when our word can not be depended upon. Are there any such on our church rolls?

Nathan called David's attention to the matter of Uriah and Bathsheba. Paul exposed the sins of the Roman Christians. Christian inconsistency is a stumbling-block.

It is a mistake to copy others. Christ is the only true model. One part of Titian's life was wasted in copying Bellini, another in imitating Giorgione. Why should any one imitate any follower of Christ when we have Christ Himself?

Agesilaus was invited to hear a man mimic the nightingale. He refused because he had heard the nightingale itself. The meaning is, Never copy the questionable life and character of any man, for the best of men are imperfect, and their imperfections are more likely to be copied than their virtues.

III. A MAN MAY OFFEND THE WEAK ONES IN THE CHURCH

That is, a man who is not himself in the Church. His example is pernicious to the spiritually feeble, the impressible, the unsophisticated, and the unsuspicious.

1. *The persecutor.*—The unspeakable Turk massacres those who refuse to accept his faith. The pointed finger

is still a power for evil. There are modes of cruelty no less severe than ax or fagot.

2. *The false teacher.*—Not long ago an infidel lectured on, "Is Life Worth Living?" giving an answer in the negative. Afterward there was an epidemic of suicides in that neighborhood.

In the Wirtz Gallery of Horrors, in Brussels, there is a picture of "Napoleon's Welcome to Hell," in which the maimed, the widowed, and the orphaned stretch forth their hands in endless pain. The judgment-day comes to all.

3. *The silent example.*—It is not necessary to say, "There is no God." Just live as if it were so. No need to cry, "Crucify Him!" Just hold aloof from Christ. It is not necessary to deny the Bible. Just let it remain, dust-covered, on the shelf. The example will be a savor unto death.

Why break through the neighbor's garden to destroy it? Throw a handful of thistle seed into the air and the wind will do the rest. The child puts its little feet into papa's footprints in the snow.

Notice:

IV. THE POSITIVE SIDE

There is a silent influence for good as well as for evil. Years ago I was under the influence of that godly man, Dr. W. G. T. Shedd, of blessed memory, both in the academy and in the theological seminary. I will never forget him. He was always so gentle, so kindly, so true. His influence is abiding.

Gabriel Max's picture, "The Greeting," is suggestive. A young martyr maiden is in a den of lions. A fierce, wild-eyed beast is just issuing from his cage. The gal-



leries are filled with horror-stricken, expectant people. A rose has just fallen at her feet. Her eyes search gratefully for the kind hand that dropped it.

Drop the kind word, do the kind deed to the suffering humanity as you pass by, and never put a straw in anybody's way in the journey from earth to heaven.

XXXIX

THE FADING LEAF

We all do fade as a leaf.

—Isaiah lxiv : 6.

THE habit of observation is better than university culture.

Galileo saw the swinging chandelier in Pisa cathedral. He pondered, and drew his conclusion. Isaac Newton saw the apple fall in his mother's orchard. He watched and reasoned. Luther went down to Rome and observed its iniquities. Hence the Reformation. Isaiah saw the sere and yellow leaf, and said that we are just like that.

I. THE FIRST LESSON IS IN BEAUX ARTS

We are living in a beautiful world. An autumn walk through a forest reveals indescribable beauty. No artist can paint it. No poet can sing it.

But a better world awaits us. Preparation was made for the coming of the queen in Holyrood Palace. All the rooms were arranged in their best, but the throne-room was the most magnificent of all. Visitors were allowed to go as far as the threshold only. Beautiful indeed is this world, the antechamber of the King; but what must be the throne-room up yonder?

II. THE SECOND LESSON IS CHRONOLOGY

"Time flies." Any wrongs to undo, old grudges to wipe out, sins to atone for? Do not delay.

Our time here is probationary.

A Phenician, removing to Rome, sent his possessions before him. He chartered a fleet of transports, and one by one loaded them. On the last vessel that sailed he was himself a passenger. On reaching Ostia, the seaport of the imperial city, he found his fleet awaiting him. Each day is as a vessel sent forth to the eternal shores. Alas! that so many of our ships should carry naught but ballast. All shall meet us again at Ostia.

III. THE THIRD LESSON IS IN SENESCENCE

This is the art of growing old gracefully and well. Holmes said:

> "And if I should chance to be
> The last leaf upon the tree
> In the spring,
> Let them smile, as I do now,
> At the old forsaken bough
> Where I cling."

The old should know two things well:

1. *How to hold on.*—Usefulness is not over at life's meridian. Cæsar planned his victorious campaigns after fifty. Herschel discovered Uranus after sixty. Milton wrote his "Paradise Lost" after he became blind and old. Bismarck and Gladstone did mighty work when their hair was white as snow.

2. *How to let go.*—Old Simeon knew how when he said, "Now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation!"

And John: "Behold, I come!" Lifting up his withered hands he answered, "Amen! Even so come, Lord Jesus."

IV. THE FOURTH LESSON IN MORTALITY

Why shudder at the thought of death? No angel is more gracious. He brings eternal life.

1. *Death is sure.*—The black camel kneels at every gate. From Adam downward all have gone—gone at all ages, from the youngest to the oldest.

2. *Death comes on time.*—Leaves do not fall because they are frost-bitten, as is generally supposed, but because they are ready and ripe for falling. Death is no accident. God makes no mistakes. No life is incomplete, however otherwise it may seem to us.

V. THE FIFTH LESSON IS IMMORTALITY

The leaf leaves its memorial record behind it. There is a scar on the tree, an eloquent epitaph of the departed. So life is followed by influence. Names may be forgotten, good deeds never.

As Wordsworth passed along the country road he heard a reaper singing as he returned from the field, and the poet wrote:

> "I listened till I had my fill,
> And as I mounted up the hill,
> The music in my heart I bore
> Long after it was heard no more."

The singer goes, but the song lives on. Our words are spoken into a phonograph and reproduced long afterward. Deeds are perpetuated in character.

Only the husk falls. The life principle remains.

VI. THE LAST LESSON IN PRACTICAL RELIGION

The soil furnishes the leaf with silica for its framework; all else comes from the air and sun. So our life, our *real life*, which is spiritual in its nature, comes

from above. "Except a man is born from above he can not see the Kingdom of God."

No chill of autumn winds can reach the soul. The framework, the body, departs to its native soil, but that which the framework holds merges into realms of endless felicity.

XL

THE OUTSIDE OF THE PLATTER

Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter.

—LUKE xi : 39.

CHRIST refers to the superficial piety of the Pharisees.

There are six books of the Mishna. The most important part is devoted to purifications. As to the washing of hands. One and a half egg-shells full of water must be used. The hands must be held in a certain position when the water is poured upon them. The right hand must rub the left and the left the right. Then they must be held downward that the water might drip off. The towel must be held properly. The schools of Hillel and Shammai discussed this with great earnestness and particularity. There are thirty chapters on cleansing of cups and platters.

At the marriage feast at Cana there were six water-pots containing twenty gallons of water, each ready for this purpose. This is but a small part of the ceremonial of Jewish life. The tombs were whitewashed every year —not so much for respect of the dead as to make their grief conspicuous. They were arranged along the road-side.

Christ hated shams. He exposed the dismal fraud.

What of the superficial piety of to-day? There is much of it. Man sees the outward, God the inward.

Look to the beginning! Have that right. See that the soul is regenerated. Many of the shams of life lie at the beginning.

There are two things to do:

1. *Act without delay.*—Quickly. On the impulse even, if there is nothing else to act upon.

2. *Act advisedly.*—Count the cost. Deliberation does not mean delay. The gunner in the thick of conflict must not fire at random, tho he must fire at once.

Our Lord declined the services of three men. One had not fully thought over the matter; to him Jesus said: "The foxes have holes, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head." Another wanted first to bury his father; to him: "Let the dead bury their dead." A third desired to bid good-by to the folks at home; to him: "He that putteth his hand to the plough and looketh back is not worthy of the Kingdom of God."

Men who do not hold out begin wrong. Their religion is superficial. Not always insincere, but always inadequate.

Take:

I. THE RELIGION OF FORM

This was the Pharisees' tithes and fastings, fringes and phylacteries.

I know a Protestant church with Romanist leanings. It attracts sentimental ladies of a tender age. It will neither go nor stay. The sermon is ten minutes long, below mediocrity. There is the boy choir, processionals, recessionals, bowings, genuflections, swinging censers, lifting of the mass, holy millinery, and the dim religious light. The effect is wholly sensuous. Professor Tyndall calls that devotion purely mechanical, and makes use of it to illustrate his theory of heat as a mode of motion.

Were this the only form of religion we could not blame scientists in rejecting it.

II. THE RELIGION OF RHAPSODY

Affection for Christ is but a part of Christ's religion. The craze for Paderewski does not prove that all his enthusiastic admirers are musical experts. The French infidel, M. Renan, admired Christ, and said, "Whatever may be the surprises of the future, Jesus will never be surpassed." And again, "All ages will proclaim that, among the sons of men, there is none born greater than Jesus." But Renan was not a Christian. The rather he openly opposed the teaching of Jesus.

There is a play recently produced in New York bearing a religious title. Christian people patronize it on that account. But in it Judas is outdone. The woman whose feet take hold on hell is bad enough as she stands at her door flaunting her shame; but a thousand times worse is the painted thing that wears a lily on her breast, holds a crucifix in her hand, and throws her vile garments over the effigy of Christ upon the cross. Yet some Christian people will think themselves pious in patronizing it. The world hates a lie.

III. THE RELIGION OF PHILOSOPHY

This is mere affectation. True religion is simplicity itself. Here's a quotation from a philosophic preacher: "The incomprehensibility of the apparatus developed in the machinery of the universe may be considered a super-eminent manifestation of stupendous majesties, whether a man stands upon the platform of his own mind and ponders scrutinizingly on its undecipherable characters, or whether he looks abroad over the magnificent equipments

and regalities of nature, surveying its amplitudes in all their scope, and its unfathomabilities in all their profundities." What is this man trying to say? This: "When I consider the heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained, what is man that thou art mindful of him and the son of man that thou regardest him?" Then why did he not say it? Is not this monstrous trifling?

IV. THE RELIGION OF SELF-CULTURE

1. *It is not always modest.*—It takes issue with the Holy Spirit. "He shall not speak of himself."

2. *It is purely selfish.*—One way of treating nervous debility is by massage. The same result might be reached by the patient sawing wood or attending to household tasks. Much Christian debility is due to concern about ourselves. Dr. Abernethy's prescription is: "Do something for somebody."

The captain of an Atlantic liner must not be over nervous about his own life-preserver; his main business is to get his passengers safely over the sea.

V. THE RELIGION OF ALTRUISM

Secular reformers meet, discuss, and adjourn. The fact is, that nearly all the humanitarian enterprises are carried on by the Christian Church. Secular societies are intermittent in their work, whereas the Church has been in session ever since the day of Pentecost.

Pity, kindness, and benevolence are not the highest elements of humanity. The lower orders of animals possess these characteristics. In Doré's picture of the Deluge a mother is represented clinging to the rock with one hand and with the other reaching out into the surg-

ing flood to save her drowning child. But on the summit of a rock is a tigress, who has climbed thither for safety, and on her back is her cub.

Much of boasted altruism is mere sentiment. A mother desiring to adopt a child inquires for a blue-eyed baby. The successful beggar is the blind pauper with a sweet face. Sentamentalists pass over the repulsive.

Who are moved by principle? Is not true benevolence moved by principle rather than emotion or sentiment? "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

Christ's religion alone takes hold upon the whole nature of man. It does not simply touch him at one or two points. Heart, reason, and conscience alike are affected. It reaches eyes and ears, hands and feet, and permeates through the whole life and character.

It also meets the Divine requirements. It is not enough to come to Jesus. Jesus is also Christ the Messiah, as well as brother. Jesus Christ, our brother and Messiah, is also Lord. Lord to protect, to command, and to rule.

Jesus, Christ, and Lord is Prophet, Priest, and King—all three in one. Prophet, to instruct; Priest, to atone for sin; and King, to bring every thought into subjection to Him.

A clean outside is pleasing to man, but a clean inside as well is pleasing to God.

XLI

THE SIGN OF THE PROPHET JONAS

An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas.

—MATTHEW xii: 39.

SO SAID Christ to the demand of the Pharisees for a sign that He was the Messiah.

He refused for two reasons:

1. *Because it would have been no use.*—On account of their unbelief. A Hindoo conjurer was commanded by his rajah to gather peaches in winter. He said, "I will send up my little son to the orchard and see." He tossed a ball of twine in the air and ordered the lad to climb. The boy ascended hand over hand till he disappeared from sight. Presently a peach fell out of heaven—another and another. Then came a bloody hand, a foot, a gory head and trunk. The conjurer wailed, "They have caught my son and killed him! O Rajah and good people, give me money to bury him!" It was done. He gathered the several parts together as if for burial, threw his cloak over them, waved his wand, and, lo! the lad walked forth! Now here was apparently a sign from heaven. Christ could have performed a feat like that—more, a genuine sign. But it would have reached reason only. The heart would have remained the same. Christ did not come to startle and bewilder.

"A man convinced against his will
Is of the same opinion still."

2. *Because they had signs enough:*

(*a*) The Bible. That contained evidence of His Messiahship in every essential part of it. They believed the Bible, but suffered self-interest and prejudice to blind their eyes to the truth of it.

(*b*) The sign of the Prophet Jonas. They believed the story of Jonah. They never doubted the record.

Now a sign is something that signifies. What is this sign of Jonah? What did our Lord mean by it?

I. IT WAS A VINDICATION OF THE TRUTH OF PROPHECY

On the way to Emmaus, Jesus said: "Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead."

It is the fashion to make light of the story of Jonah and the great fish as a fable.

1. *The Jews did not so regard it.*—They never called the event into question. To them it was historic.

2. *The early Christians believed it.*—Pictures of Jonah and the great fish are on the graves of the catacombs. The dead were laid away in the hope of a resurrection by the sign of the prophet Jonah. As the sea monster vomited up the prophet, so the grave one day would give up its dead. Life and immortality were thus indicated as an article of faith.

3. *Christ Himself believed it.*—He cited it as a guarantee of His own resurrection. Had He regarded the story as mere folk-lore He could not have made use of it. We do not use fables as facts. Try it in a court of justice. "As surely as Jason sought and found the Golden Fleece, so surely will I tell the truth." Will that answer

for an oath? No. What will? This: "As surely as there is a God in heaven, I will tell the truth."

Try it in a common matter, like the contract for a debt. Make your note thus: "By the sign of Jack and the Beanstalk or of Cinderella and her Crystal Slipper, I promise to pay when this obligation falls due." Does this seem preposterous? Not more so than if Jesus referred to Jonah as a fable to verify the truth that He was the Son of God.

II. IT WAS DESIGNED TO VERIFY AND EMPHASIZE CHRIST'S MESSIAHSHIP

The antitype was the resurrection of Christ. He verifies His claim by this. Paul argued in the same way in writing to the Roman Christians.

The doctrine covers His relationship with His people:

1. *He is our prophet.*—That is, a teacher in spiritual things. He stated them with authority. Can His word be depended upon? Has the experience of His followers ever proved it? Let the millions of the past and present give testimony and it will be like the sound of many waters.

2. *He is our Priest*—It was the duty of the priest to offer sacrifices. Christ offered Himself as "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

3. *He is our King.*—To protect and rule. What is the greatest power on earth?

Wealth? Crœsus is dead. "Fie, fie! Shall Death have me?" said Cardinal Beaufort. "Are my treasuries empty? Go, bribe him." But Beaufort is dead.

Navies and armies? Pharaoh's hosts went down in the Red Sea. All that represented that power in the past are dead.

Imperial power? Death stands at the gate of the cemetery, and, laughing, says: "I gather them in! I gather them in!" Queen Elizabeth, covering her eyes with her hands, cried: "My kingdom for an inch of time!" But Elizabeth lies side by side in the great Abbey with other dead rulers.

Death conquers all and Christ conquers death. "I am the resurrection and the life."

III. IT WAS INTENDED AS AN ASSURANCE OF LIFE AND IMMORTALITY

"Life and Immortality are brought to light in the Gospel."

The world had always dreamed, guessed, wondered, and hoped in regard to immortality. But the mists have rolled away.

Christ came forth from the grave. He showed Himself to multitudes before he ascended to heaven in the presence of hundreds of people on the crest of that mountain which to-day overshadows Jerusalem. The apostles and all true Christian teachers have proclaimed and still proclaim the mighty truth.

May God bless it!

XLII

IN THE FIELDS AT EVENTIDE

> And Isaac went out to meditate in the field at eventide.
>
> —Genesis xxiv:63.

LITTLE is known of Isaac. He was one of the ancient nobodies, the son of a great man and the father of another.

Two things, however, make him illustrious:

1. *He was the child of the Covenant.*

2. *He was a type of Christ.*—Like Jesus, he suffered himself to be bound, and was willing to be offered as a sacrifice. His life was uneventful.

He meditated at eventide in his fields. Of what? His broad acres, money-making, the coming Messiah, wedlock? The latter probably, for his bride-to-be was approaching.

Here is a lesson on thinking. Observe:

I. THINK

The underlying sin of sins is thoughtlessness. The saintly McCheyne said: "More people perish for want of thought than in any other way."

The blunders of life are due to this. You voted the wrong ticket because you did not think. You lost your money in that losing venture because you did not think. Pernicious habits are due to this. You bought a Sunday newspaper because you did not think, and now you are

careless of Sabbath observances. It is want of thought that leads even to crime and insanity. Our prisons and asylums are filled with men who "did not think" when they began their evil and degrading practises.

If men would but think one hour a day they would defeat the devil and stand acquitted at the judgment-day. There is no room for the plea, "I didn't think."

II. THINK IN SOLITUDE

Americans have the reputation of doing everything in a hurry. Solitude? Why, it is not in their vocabulary.

On the seal of Vespasian was an anchor and a dolphin, meaning, "Fixt opinion and swift execution." Convictions, like an anchor gripping the rock and a swift spirit that speeds to its purpose as a fish cleaves the waters of the sea. But that distinction is reached only within the closed door.

III. THINK TO SOME PURPOSE

Dreams, like castles in the air, amount to very little.

Thoughts can be governed. The Scotchman says: "Do wi' yer thoughts as wi' yer ill neeber: dinna gie him a stool to sit on."

Profitable thinking is an *idea*.

In my college days I knew an old man with long white hair, who had heard a man say in the shop: "Why does not some one invent a sewing-machine?" Elias Howe had the same thought, but went on with his thinking. He thought *out* the sewing-machine.

One secret of profitable thinking is *attention*. Converge the faculties. Arrive at something definite. Beware of squandering energy.

IV. THINK ON THE HIGHEST THEMES

Truths, knocking at our door, demand attention.

1. *There is the past.*—Looking over the shoulder you will see SIN. The criminal hides. Retribution hounds him.

You will see DEATH. That follows after. You do not like to think of it, but that does not alter the fact.

You will see the CROSS. "Come, let us reason together; tho your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; tho they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

2. *There is the present hour.*—Æsop tells of a philosopher who, looking skyward, fell into a pit and cried for help. A shepherd pulled him out, and said: "Look more to thy feet and less to the skies, and thou wilt save thyself much trouble." Present duty and present responsibility confront us all.

3. *There is the future.*—A wise man will not shut his eyes to the inevitable. Time is a handbreadth. Eternity, who can measure it?

The age calls for thought—thought on the highest themes. The eventide is the time to think. It was there where the fairest sight greeted Isaac's eyes.

Companies of angels come to us in the silent hour of meditation. Troops of promises and bright hopes and aspirations. Christ comes to the thoughtful and says, "Peace be unto you!"

XLIII

SHIBBOLETH

> Then said they unto him, Say now Shibboleth: and he said Sibboleth: for he could not frame to pronounce it right.
>
> —JUDGES xii: 6.

JEPHTHAH was a bandit. He had been driven out of Gilead. He fled to the hill country and gathered a band of "vain fellows" about him. He was sent for, however, in the time of Gilead's extremity, and proved himself a great captain.

In battle with the Ephraimites he smote them hip and thigh. He placed guards at the fords of Jordan to head off the fugitives. The Gileadites and Ephraimites were cousins, and could only be distinguished by their articulation. The Ephraimites used no aspirate. So, as Milton says, they fell

> "Without reprieve, adjudged to death
> For want of well pronouncing Shibboleth."

The two peoples, divided only by the width of the Jordan, were clearly differentiated in this manner, just as we detect a Frenchman by his inability to say "thin" or "thistle."

We think of *shibboleth* as the watchword of a party. Its significance goes deeper. The power of life and death is not in such names as Luther, Calvin, or Wesley. They represent great facts, to be sure, and the unregenerate can not speak them.

One shibboleth is the great word

I. GOD

Those who have not entered upon the spiritual life can say: "Law, Force, Energy—Something not ourselves that maketh for righteousness." But they can not apprehend the Deity in the Christian sense.

He is the *one* God. Not multitudinous as the polytheists make Him, nor an all-pervasive, nitrous oxide, unconscious entity, or nonentity, as pantheists make Him; but one great, living, thinking, reigning personal Sun at the center of the universe.

He is the *triune* God—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. These three are one, as light is one, though we speak of the light of the sun, the light of the moon, and the light of the stars. Man himself is a tripartite being—body, soul, and spirit. The flame of a candle is light, heat, and electricty—these three are one. These are imperfect analogies, we grant, but they throw light on the mystery of the Trinity. It is not to be rejected because of the mystery that is in it.

He is the *incarnate* God. "The word was made flesh and dwelt among men." God did it. It was as easy for Him to do that as to do other things we have no doubt about. Why should the world reject this doctrine? The same truth finds expression in Greek and Roman mythologies and Oriental religions.

Another shibboleth is

II. FAITH

Faith is the apprehension of facts in the province of the unseen.

All knowledge is covered by two terms: Faith and Science.

1. *Science covers the field of the visible.*—This deals only

with facts. Much the larger part of science deals with hypotheses. A young man in Yale Divinity Hall was practising with an air-gun. His aim being poor, he sent a ball through a professor's window. It happened that this man was a professor of science. Now was his opportunity. He computed the parabola. For are not the data here? The round hole in the window and the ball embedded in the wall. Thus knowing the exact curve, he was able to trace the projectile to a certain room. It belonged to a "theolog.," who protested his innocence. But exact science had sealed his doom. At this juncture, however, the real malefactor stepped out of the closet and confessed his guilt, thus exonerating his room-mate. Physical science is not necessarily untrue because it may make wrong deductions when it is outside of its sphere. But in all things that can be felt and seen it must be exact or it is not science.

2. *Faith covers the field of the unseen and the eternal.*— A larger field than that of science. True faith is just as exact as true science. Do not confound it with credulity, which rests on mere hearsay. Faith is the most substantial thing in the world.

The sources of faith's evidences are prayer, Scripture, and experience. In prayer God speaks directly to the soul. Science can furnish no such evidence as the Magdalene had when our Lord said, "Thy sins be forgiven thee." This great spiritual fact, the pardon of sin, is as real as a stone or a planet, but logarithms can not demonstrate it.

God speaks also to the soul through Scripture. Scripture is our rule of faith and practise. Its authenticity and credibility were before our confession. The helmsman steers by his chart. He made sure that it had the

proper seal and signature upon it when he started out on the voyage. He asks no more questions. He would be a fool if at every flurry of wind, when the ship begins to reel and toss, to question the authenticity of his chart. He believes it and consults it.

And then experience. "That which mine eyes have seen and my hands have handled of the word of life declare I unto you." If Christ has come into my life and transformed it I know it, and can not be made to believe otherwise. Such conviction is impossible to those who have not known Him. Can you send a man to see Chamonix for you? Can you listen to the Oratorio of the Messiah by proxy?

So the infinite world of invisible facts is open to faith only. You look at the stars and bless the telescope; but you look through the interstellar spaces, on and on, and say: "Somewhere yonder are heaven and the great white throne! This is the path which no fowl knoweth and the eagle eye hath not seen. Here there is no use for the telescope nor for fleshly sight. Faith alone can apprehend the unseen and the eternal."

Another Shibboleth is

III. PROVIDENCE

The world can say "Kismet!" It believes in Fortune; dreads a mysterious, supernatural Something; is afraid to sail on Friday; dare not sit down at table with thirteen; carries a crooked sixpence in its pocket; nails a horseshoe to its mast. But we believe in God at the center, ruling all, even to the detail of the universal and harmonious plan.

Here are three truths covering the past, present, and future:

1. *Predestination.*—The world refuses to articulate that word. How simple the dogma! If there is a God, He must foreknow; if He foreknows, then the ultimate facts are a certainty. A fact which was eternally known and certain to the Divine mind must have been predestinated.

Is it objected that this would interfere with the freedom of the will? Man is just as free as if there had been no decree at all. It does not interfere with the freedom of your choice that your wife is preparing dinner for you, that she knows what you are going to eat, that she ordains just what you are going to eat and nothing else. Neither does the fact that whatever I do has been eternally clear to the Divine mind affect my doing what I will.

2. *Government.*—I am under Divine supervision. Last night I slept—went into the land of forgetfulness. Did God forget me? Who kept me while in that condition? I awoke this morning. Consciousness returned. I came back from forgetfulness. Who brought me back? Myself? Nature? Then what? Behold enough to utter the shibboleth, GOD. Who took my hand all day long and kept me from accident and from sudden death? I can not escape from the care and supervision of God, neither do I want to; for logic and common sense compel me to accept the blessed truth.

3. *Grace.*—Grace is within the sphere of Providence. It is the most special of all special providences. The world sees sin and penalty, but the Christian can see one thing further: the Divine Father in the redemption by the Cross. The world believes in *karma*, the doctrine of consequences; but the Christian says: "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoso-

ever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Still another shibboleth is

IV. RIGHTEOUSNESS

The world can say "Morality." But righteousness is a different thing. Morality is personal merit. Righteousness is godliness. It comprehends a trio of doctrines.

1. *Regeneration.*—Not outward seeming nor resolving nor reforming, but an inward change. A lion in a cage is a lion still.

Nicodemus understood morality and reformation, but not a new heart, a new conscience, a new mind, a new man. Yet Christ insisted upon regeneration.

2. *Sanctification.*—This is the Holy Spirit's work. He says, Be like Christ and I will help you. This is something better than ethical culture. Ethical culture is good enough, but it is one sided. You can buy carpet that way, printed on one side, at a quarter a yard. Sanctification, however, is ingrained. True character is dyed in the wool and it wears.

3. *Imputation.*—Nothing but this can make man perfect. Be as good as you can be in the name of God and manhood; but then confess, in all honesty, that you are not as good as you should be. The last touch is put on character when Christ throws about us the white robe of His righteousness, His infinite merit.

Yet another shibboleth is

V. THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST

The world speaks of the philosophy of history, the logic of events, the evolution of the race.

The Christian finds the solution of these problems in the Kingdom of Christ.

The world says, "Gold, pleasure, personal emolument —let us eat and drink and be merry." The Christian says, "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God."

This Kingdom has its beginning in a surrender of the heart to Christ. It is "within you." We are not in the Kingdom till the Kingdom is in us. All must be brought to the King.

Again: it is about us. It grows—multiplies by every new recruit.

This is, ultimately, the setting up of the Kingdom of Christ. His sovereignity is supreme.

There is one watchword at heaven's gate: "In His Name." All other shibboleths will fail. It was the watchword of the old Crusaders. A knight who was pursued, drew near the castle, riding hot and fast, cried, "In His Name!" Up went the drawbridge, open flew the gates, and he was safe.

Have you learned it? Can you give the countersign? Can you say it from the heart: "JESUS!"

XLIV

SUNDAY PLEASURES

> If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable; and shalt honor him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride on the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.
>
> —ISAIAH lviii: 13, 14.

THE sin of our time is Sabbath desecration.

It used to be customary to put chains across avenues in the neighborhood of churches while service was going on.

Now we hear the rattle of chariots and the rumble of horse-cars. Theaters are thrown open, athletic parks are filled with players, the boulevards are thronged with wheelmen, dance-halls are the scenes of the gay and the giddy, and so on almost *ad libitum*.

Observe:

I. THE SABBATH RESTS ON DIVINE AUTHORITY

It will not be disputed that the Decalog came from God, nor that He had a right to institute laws for man's guidance.

Some do say that Christ abrogated the fourth commandment. He, however, found that commandment overlaid with human traditions. The Rabbinical exactions were intolerable. A man must not walk in a grain-

field lest the ungodly should say that he had been threshing; nor chase a butterfly, lest one might say that he had been hunting; nor, in feeding his fowls, leave grain on the ground, for it might seem like sowing; nor, in dipping a radish in salt, leave it there, for it might look like pickling. Jesus did not destroy the commandment, but rather restored it to its proper place and meaning. A ship is docked to scrape off the barnacles. He would be a foolish man to say that that was equivalent to scuttling it. Jesus simply stripped the fourth commandment of its accumulated barnacles and gave it back to the people in its original form.

II. THE SABBATH RESTS ON OUR FILIAL RELATION WITH GOD

He made man in His own image. That establishes our relationship with Him. "Now are we the sons of God."

When James II. of England heard of the approach of Dutch William, he fled by a little boat on the Thames. Passing by Lambeth Palace, he dropped the Stuart's seal in the river; but it was fished up. The Sabbath is like that seal—it keeps up our relation with the Throne. To disregard it is to be disloyal. It is we and not it who are injured by its desecration.

III. THE SABBATH IS INTERWOVEN WITH OUR PHYSICAL CONSTITUTION

The observance of this law preserves health. Violation of it breaks it down.

Dr. Haegler, the scientist, calls attention, in his work on "The Expenditure and Repair of Vital Force," to the relation between sleep and Sabbath rest. He holds

that Sabbath rest is as necessary as sleep to regain normal vigor. That scientific fact is corroborated by experience, and indeed is based upon it.

IV. THE SABBATH IS NECESSARY TO SPIRITUAL LIFE

Without it man would naturally drift into a cold and secular life. Spiritual death would follow as a consequence. The soul should have a chance to live and flourish as well as the body. God has provided for that. He who sets it aside does it to his own detriment and everlasting peril.

How should the day be observed?

1. *By laying aside unnecessary work.*—All work except works of mercy and of necessity. A ship may sail at sea, but must not start on that day, because the captain has a choice of days. "In it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor the stranger that is within thy gates."

The Pharisees complained that the disciples plucked the ears of corn and ate them on the Sabbath day. Christ said that they had committed no offense, as this was necessary to sustain life. Seven of His most noted miracles of healing were wrought on the Sabbath day.

On the Sabbath day the Christian may go to the slums with the Gospel, to the hospital to smooth the pillow of the suffering, to give the cup of water to the thirsty, to stretch forth the helping hand, and do other necessary merciful works. This is to rest—the sweetest possible kind of rest.

2. *By refraining from worldly pleasures.*—What pleas-

ures are prohibited? All that are contrary to the principles of Christianity.

But specify! Well, such as reading of the Sunday newspaper and light fiction, playing of golf, baseball, cricket, indulging in wheeling, games of all kinds, and frivolity. Do you say, "Oh, that is old"? So are the sun, air, and water old. "It's Puritanical." But the Puritans laid the foundation of this country, and we are very proud of it as second to none in the world. "But we are cooped up all the week, and need the fresh air and light and recreation." Yes, but that is not the quest of Sabbath-breakers. They exhaust their energies more in pleasure-seeking on the Sabbath day than by work on any other day. God will not condemn a man for seeking sunlight, air, and recreation on the Sabbath, except when he does it at times of worship. The day is specially set apart for that purpose. Culture of the soul is a paramount obligation, and may not be set aside by our whims and fancies, or any notion contrary to the plain precepts of the Word of God. It is the Lord's day. When we take it as ours, we take what does not belong to us. We should be arrested for stealing if we take from another what belongs to him and appropriate it to our own use.

As a rule, thinking men mean to do right. They love home and country. To preserve both, Sabbath-keeping is an absolute necessity. Any encroachment upon its sacred duties, therefore, should be discouraged.

Satan is the great leader of Sabbath desecration. A Scotch minister one day met a parishioner much cast down. "How is it wi' ye the day?" "The adversary has been at me again." "And what's he been saying to you, Janet?" "He's been saying it's a' a

delusion, that the Bible's a tissue o' lees, that there is no heaven, no hell, no Savior; it's a' a delusion." "And what did you say to him, Janet?" "Ah, minister, I kent better than that. I kent it was no use to argy wi' him; I jist referred him to the Lord."

That's the secret. When in doubt as to what should be or should not be done on the Lord's day, just refer the matter to Him in prayer, and it shall be told you what to do. "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not."

XLV

MAKING HASTE

He that believeth shall not make haste.
—ISAIAH xxviii: 16.

MAKING haste is one of the prevailing vices of our times. A wise man was asked for a panacea for evil. His answer: "Patience; all things come to those who wait."

Peter's answer would be, "Faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and charity."

We are accustomed to think that Patience is the scullery maid of the sister graces. Finally she will be at the palace, clothed in royal apparel and wedded to the king's son.

We lack patience because we lack faith. God is far off. The world is too near.

Observe:

I. WE ARE TOO EAGER ABOUT OUR TASKS

Our children can hardly wait to be through with their schooling. The feeling grows and follows them into after life. I went to Phillips Academy for a little polishing in preparation for college. Dr. Taylor said: "My boy, you need two years of earnest study." Seeing my disappointment, he added, "There's no hurry. Don't fret, the world will wait for you." TRUE. It pays to get ready and to get ready well.

Christ was a carpenter's apprentice. He made plows and repaired furniture. He knew that the world was dying for want of His redemptive offices. Men were going lock-step down to hell. A soul was passing into eternity every second, and He was aware of it; yet He went on making plows and mending furniture. He learned His lessons line by line, precept by precept, at the Rabbinical school, and in fulness of time, when well prepared, He entered upon His great work.

II. WE ARE TOO MUCH GIVEN TO WORRY

This is an American sin. A young man starts out to practise law. He tires waiting for clients. He casts his eye over the political arena. He enters for the prize. He wins it—first a local office and then a seat in Congress. Is that success? He certainly failed as a lawyer. Has he succeeded as a Congressman? The saddest sight at sea is a floating hulk, abandoned and useless. The corresponding sight is a political hulk, high and dry upon the shore, friendless and of no apparent use.

A young man enters commercial life. But measuring cambric and weighing sugar are too slow for him. He invests his little all in some scheme that promises immediate wealth. Suppose he wins. Is that success? At the great Chicago fire a man lost the accumulations of a lifetime by opening the vaults too soon. By waiting bonds and mortgages would have been saved. There was a puff of flame and a heap of ashes. All was gone.

Over-eagerness is ruin. The best livelihood and the most satisfying in the long run is that gotten by what Robert Burns calls "gin-house prudence and grubbing industry." All things come right to those who wait.

III. WE ARE TOO EAGER IN SPIRITUAL THINGS

Sometimes. But mark the difference between deliberation and delay. No *delay*, but much *deliberation*. Christ, pointing to an unfinished tower, showed the folly of an undertaking without counting the cost. "This man began to build and was not able to finish." The Christian life is not to be begun thoughtlessly nor in undue haste, but with deliberation and wisdom.

Yet a work may be done instantly and with deliberation. The blacksmith draws the red iron from the forge, lifts his hammer with utmost deliberation, not in haste, yet striking instantly.

We sometimes deceive ourselves by waiting for some supposed greater light and stronger conviction, when we should act at once with the light we possess at the time and the conviction already upon us. Pressing duty should never be put off.

Surrender to God, for instance, is a duty. We learned that at our mother's knee. No new facts can enter into that problem. Waiting brings no new developments. He who lets this opportunity go by default is making a bad blunder. The frontier philosopher said: "Be sure you are right, then go ahead." Neither Paul nor Plato could have marked out a wiser rule of life.

IV. WE HURRY IN SPIRITUAL GROWTH

We want to run when we are only able to creep. Remember that character is only of slow growth: "First the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear." There must be time in grace as in nature for rain and sunshine. The oak that defies the storm and whirlwind is the growth of a hundred years. The fungus under its shadow came up last night, but a breath destroys it. The

sturdy stuff of which martyrs and confessors are made of is of gradual development. The "unco guid" is simply pious sentiment. Grandmother, sitting in the chimney-corner with her Bible, sees visions through her dim eyes; her heart is full of peace; sin and passion are subdued; no bondage of sin, no warring of spirit and flesh, no doubts or misgivings—she simply rests in God! How came she into such a placid state? It was a growth. "Grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." The pilgrim's progress is a life's journey to Beulah land.

At early morn the Alpine tourist began the ascent of the Matterhorn. The air was bracing, and he hastened with springing steps. He passed a peasant going on with steady strides, and said: "Slow fellows, these, hereabouts." But the path was rugged and steep. Ere noon his steps lagged, and he sat down under the shadow of a crag. The peasant came along with that steady, swinging gait, and passed by him. It is another version of the hare and the tortoise. True in spiritual as in secular life. It pays to plod. Faith is our alpenstock. Lean hard upon it.

The believer can afford to wait. "All things work together for good to them that love God." Good times will come. Bear trouble patiently. "Bide a wee and dinna weary." "A little while." "Hope thou in God."

V. WE ARE RESTLESS IN CHRISTIAN SERVICE

We want to do some great thing. But doing the next thing is the best achievement. If the apostles had not heeded the injunction "Tarry ye at Jerusalem until ye are endued with power," but started out to conquer the

world for Christ, they would have failed miserably. But waiting, not restlessly, not indolently, on their knees, they accomplished mighty things for God. Moses, Saul, and others patiently waited in preparation.

Then we are impatient as to results. I know a lad who planted flowering peas beside his mother's door, hoping that the vines would creep over it. But in his impatience he dug up the roots to see if they were sprouting. We are all doing things as silly in our larger tasks. It is ours to plant the seed, it is God's to see that it germinates.

Adoniram Judson nearly broke his heart because for a long time there was not a single convert, tho year after year he prayed and wrought with a consuming passion. Where was the fault? His? No. God was biding His time. When the time did come thousands cried out, "What shall we do?" The harvest will ripen, but it may be on our graves. The Patmos dreamer saw golden vials full of odors which were the prayers of saints. "Not one of them is forgotten before God."

Let us wait patiently for our Lord's coming. He will come—come all the quicker when His people learn the lesson couched in the text, "He that believeth shall not make haste."

XLVI

WISDOM

Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom.

—PROVERBS iv: 7.

DR. JOHNSON said: "A man would scarcely be willing to learn needlework; but if he could arrive at it without the painful process of acquisition, he would e'en be glad to know how to mend his wife's ruffle." All knowledge is worth having: the three R's, the arts and sciences, philosophy, the polite accomplishments, everything in the encyclopedia.

Above all is the knowledge of spiritual things. The name of "Wisdom" is given to this.

Great problems confront us. For example, Does death end all? Can a man be just with God? What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

Observe as to these:

I. WISDOM IS ATTAINABLE

This is an age of guesses. The most popular phase of thought is Agnosticism. It is the Greek equivalent of the Latin *ignorance*. In plain language, a Greek agnostic is a Latin ignoramus.

The original agnostic was Pyrrho of Elis. He said, "We know nothing, not even that we do know nothing." His philosophy was an interrogation point. Ignorance was the pillow of the soul.

The modern father of Agnosticism was Comte, who said: "We are cognizant of impressions, but we can not tell whether they correspond to anything real. Ideas may be mere phantasms. We can not know whether anything is behind them."

Are we shadows, therefore, walking in a dream? Matthew Arnold, a follower of Comte, defines God to be a Force. But what is an impersonal Force? Can it help in trouble? What use have we for an armless, eyeless, heartless specter of a God?

Herbert Spencer's definition of life is: "Life is a definite combination of heterogeneous changes, both simultaneous and successive, in correspondence with eternal coexistences and sequences."

Maudsley even questions the reality of thought. Mind is phosphorus. Thought is atomic friction. An electric force runs along a pulpy cord called a nerve until it reaches a pulpy substance called the brain, and the result is an idea.

All these men are proud of their ignorance, just as the old-time mendicant friars were prouder of the holes in their garments than princes were of their purple.

But spiritual things *can* be known. We have a spiritual faculty which links us to God.

The spectroscope is so sensitive to certain chemical effects that, being turned upon one of the heavenly bodies millions of miles away, it will detect nitrogen or sodium there. Spiritual faculty is sensitive to spiritual forces. It is a Divine inheritance. God made us akin to Himself. In this we are distinguished from the lower orders of being. A fox calculated the width of a brook before leaping, an eagle reasons with respect to the distance before swooping down upon the prey; but none of the

lower orders can apprehend a moral truth or commune with God.

We can not comprehend all truth any more than we can take into our lungs all the air, but we can inhale a breath at a time quite sufficient for life. We may not drink a river at a gulp, but we can quench our thirst out of the palm of the hand. We may not have the earth, but a garden spot may be ours in which we can raise roses to make life sweeter and better. A mouse lived in a cheese-box until its provender was exhausted, and then, climbing up and looking over the edge, was amazed that the world was so large. We are living in the world of sense, but one day we shall climb up and wonder at what is beyond. Surprises are in store for us.

II. IT IS OUR PRIVILEGE AND PREROGATIVE TO INFORM OURSELVES CONCERNING THESE THINGS

"The mind of man is this world's true dimension,
And knowledge is the measure of his mind.
And thus the mind, in its vast comprehension,
Contains more worlds than the world can find."

Old Kaiser Wilhelm of Germany, on a visit to a rural school, said to a child, holding up a coin, "To what kingdom does this belong?" She answered, "To the mineral kingdom." Holding up an orange, he said, "To what kingdom does this belong?" "To the vegetable kingdom." Then laying his hand upon his breast, he asked, "To what kingdom do I belong?" "Your Majesty, you belong to the kingdom of God."

There are three steps in the line of truth:

1. *Credulity.*—Here, however, dwell the superstitious —dupes, fetish worshipers: those who nail a horseshoe to

the mast, tie an amulet about their necks, object to sitting at a table with thirteen, who believe everything they see in print, and accept everything they hear. They are like that collier in Wales who, being asked what the people in the parish believed, answered, "What the preacher believes."

"And what does the preacher believe?"

"Why, sir, he believes what we believe."

"And what do you and the preacher believe?"

"Why, surely, we both believe the very same thing."

2. *Doubt.*—This is one step higher. A skeptic is better than a bigot. Genuine doubt is not a bad thing. He is like the blind man whose eyes were partially opened who "saw men as trees walking." But doubt is not a good thing to abide in. It is a good thing to move away from. To end in doubt is ruin. It is even dangerous to pause. He who honestly doubts Jesus Christ will not sleep to-night until he has solved the problem. There are two kinds of doubt as there are two twilights—the one grows darker and the other lighter.

3. *Belief.*—Faith is substance resting on evidence: the substance of spiritual things resting on evidence which appeals to moral sense. Paul was what his faith made him.

Pope sang:

> "For modes of faith let graceless zealots fight;
> His faith can not be wrong whose life is right."

A man lives up to what he believes.

III. DUTY DEMANDS SOUND CONVICTIONS AS TO SPIRITUAL TRUTH

We have no right to let spiritual truth go by default. If there is a God we ought to know it. If we have a

soul we ought to know that. If there is an eternity we ought to ask, Whither bound? For these things are knowable.

But how shall we know?

Not by any scientific method. The old monks of four hundred years ago might have seen Jupiter's moons had they been willing to look through Galileo's telescope, but they would not. Neither will men know spiritual truth if they refuse to look into the Scriptures. "Spiritual things are spiritually discerned." No man can understand these things unless spiritually illuminated. Down, therefore, on your knees, all you who would get wisdom.

At best, however, we can but touch the borders.

> "All things I thought I knew; but now confess
> The more I know I know, I know the less."

There are great surprises for all in quest of the spiritual. A blind boy in India was much moved by the thought that one day he would see. He was fond of repeating, "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and in my flesh I shall see God." In his last moments, after a long period of unconsciousness, he woke up, and, rolling his blind eyes, exclaimed: "Copane sees! The darkness has cleared away. I see heaven and the King in His beauty. Tell the missionary that the blind boy sees."

Revelations await us in this narrow sphere of the senses. Now we know in part, but by and by, what? Wait and see! The day is breaking. The glory is being revealed. "Get wisdom."

XLVII

PAUL AT ATHENS

Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars' hill, and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. For as I passed by and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, To THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you.

—ACTS xvii: 22, 23.

MILTON said that Athens was the "eye of Greece, mother of arts and eloquence." In such a place a man of ordinary taste and culture would be filled with esthetic enthusiasm. Yet Paul, tho appreciating all that he saw in the way of art and culture, was fired with a holier enthusiasm.

He saw the Parthenon beautified by the skill of Phidias and Praxiteles. The Areopagus crowded with the images of Mars. The famous schools of philosophy by the Ilissus. Images of gods and heroes. Pliny says that there were three thousand such. It was a proverb: "There are more gods in Athens than men." A winged figure adorned the front of every home in Hermes Street. Along the avenue of Tripods votive offerings were given to the gods who helped the athletes to win in their games. Gods everywhere—gods on pedestals, in niches, on corners of streets; gods and demigods, good and bad and indifferent. A wilderness of gods!

Paul was mightily moved. He mounted a rostrum in the public square and began to speak. No difficulty in getting an audience. Men, women, priests, philosophers—all sorts and conditions of people were there. He told them of Jesus and the resurrection, which to the Greeks were a pair of deities. He who introduced a new god into Athens was a public benefactor. Paul enchained his audience. It was suggested to go to Areopagus for a better hearing. There the apostle preached his famous sermon.

I. OBSERVE THE MAN

Renan calls him "the little ugly Jew." He was stoop-shouldered, weak-eyed, and a stammerer; but it did not take the Athenians long to find out that he was a famous man, a profound thinker, and a skilful dialectician.

Paul's power lay in his convictions. He gave proof of this in the Rabbinical school, and was bound to be a leader of men. He was a pupil of the famous Gamaliel. He became a member of the Sanhedrin, the highest ecclesiastical and civil court in his nation. Great things were expected of him.

Then came the great sunburst. On the Damascus road he was converted. He cheerfully surrendered brightest hopes, ambitions, and aspirations. He laid everything at the feet of his new Master.

II. OBSERVE THE PULPIT

It was a fateful place. Many a man had died here. Here Demosthenes displayed his burning eloquence. Here Socrates apologized and drank the fatal hemlock. Facing the place stood the Temple of the Furies and over it the Temple of Mars. He stood on the Rock of Impudence,

where criminals defended their lives. P
not himself, but Christ, his Lord, and orou
to those cultured people that has revo
world.

The Athenian gods have all fallen; g
Zeno, Epicurus, Plato, and the rest, repr
the philosophies, are scarcely more than
But the Word of God endureth forever.

III. OBSERVE THE AUDIENC

Conspicuous among the common people
priests wearing the badges of their gods, phi
students in their classic robes, representin
schools by the Ilissus.

1. *Stoics.*—These were pantheists, who
as "the All," "the Universal Soul," v
Christian Scientists, so-called, do now t
terms. Man was simply an exhalation
pervading Force of the Universe, whose
to be absorbed like a drop of water in t
sea.

2. *Epicureans.*—These were materialis
ends all." What better could they do wi
than to choose the sphorism and live up to
eat, drink, and be merry, for to-morrow we

3. *Academicians.*—These were agnostics.
ed of many things, but knew nothing. A
had a "perhaps" in it.

Aside from these philosophers there v
curiosity-mongers and hangers-on. All w
on to the judgment-bar. Probably this th
fied the preacher's soul to do his best. I
he proclaimed the Gospel without fear.

IV. OBSERVE THE SERMON

His introduction was felicitous. He told what he saw. He pleased them by telling how religious the Athenians were. The word rendered "superstitions" carries the meaning of religion here rather than idle fancies or fanaticisms. He would naturally gain the ear of his questioning audience and disarm antagonism—in part, at least.

This paved the way for subsequent weighty thoughts. "The unknown God" was revealed, and backed up by arguments from nature and a quotation from one of their own poets. Then he pressed home the potential truth that we are all His offspring. This same God had revealed Himself in Jesus Christ, who brought life and immortality to light.

V. OBSERVE THE RESULT

Paul did not finish his sermon. The meeting was broken up. But no truth uttered is in vain. "It shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please and prosper in the thing whereunto I sent it."

1. *Some mocked.*—It was easy for those grand philosophers to make sport of the stammering little Jew. It was quite in their line to point the finger at his grotesque doctrine. The resurrection and the judgment were preposterous to them. The generation of mockers are still with us.

2. *Some would hear him again.*—But they never did. Like modern congregations, they doubtless dissected the preacher. After remarking about his appearance and voice and manners, one might say, "But that was a clever opening. How he complimented our piety." "True," said another, "I like his fervor. How he

warmed to his theme when he spoke of the judgment, still he spoke differently somehow from our orators." A third would say, "He is a master of logic. Did you mark that syllogism?—'We are God's offspring, but we are living souls; living souls can not be born of dead matter: ergo, God is not a graven image.' The man is a dialectician sure enough." A fourth might say, "Yes, he is a master of literature, too. What could have been more appropriate than that quotation from Aratus, the poet?"

They all agreed that Paul was a man of power, and worthy of the audience and of the place. They would hear him again. Paul never resumed his sermon, never set foot in Athens again. He sailed by the port several times. Perhaps he heaved a sigh as he passed, that these cultured people rejected the message. On it depended their weal or woe.

Oh, why will men procrastinate? They do not mean to die. They only put off.

A Russian legend tells of a man who intended to build a house. The materials were all ready, but he neglected to put them together until death spared him the trouble. The legend runs:

> "And thus in silent waiting stood
> The piles of stones and piles of wood,
> Till Death, who in his vast affairs
> Ne'er puts off things as men do theirs,
> Winked at our hero as he passed:
> 'Your house is finished, sir, at last—
> A narrow house, a house of clay,
> Your mansion for an endless day.'"

3. *Some believed.*—Dionysius was one of them. Of him it is said that he became the Bishop of Athens. Damaris,

a woman, was another. These had an ear for the Gospel. Why not pray for hearing ears as well as for the messenger.

There are some lower orders of existences that can hear only the smaller sounds. An earthquake or the crash of thunder they never hear. So there are people who listen only to those sounds that are heard on the lower levels of life—the call to wealth, to pleasure, to perishable honors. They can not hear the still small voice that whispers to their conscience, inviting them to duty, to right living, to life, and immortality. Oh, for the hearing ear and the understanding heart!

God speaks to every one. He calls us to the pardon of sin, to usefulness in life, and to final glory in heaven.

XLVIII

THE MOTHER BIRD AND HER YOUNG

If a bird's nest chance to be before thee in the way in any tree, or on the ground, whether they be young ones, or eggs, and the dam sitting upon the young, or upon the eggs, thou shalt not take the dam with the young; but thou shalt in any wise let the dam go, and take the young to thee; that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest prolong thy days.

—DEUTERONOMY xxii: 6, 7.

THE Jewish lawyer was a doctor of divinity. The government was a theocracy.

It was a time of word-weaving and letter-worship. Precepts were measured. There were two hundred and forty-eight affirmative and three hundred and sixty-five negative precepts; total, six hundred and thirteen. That was the number of letters in the Decalog; also the number of veins and arteries in the human body; also the Rabbinical *tsitsith* (fringe of his robe), the letters of which being used numerically made a total of six hundred; to this add eight for the threads of the braid and five for the knots, and you have six hundred and thirteen—the full number of the precepts of the law.

Some precepts were light, others heavy. Which was the greatest? Opinions differed. One held that it was the Sabbath law; another, the injunction against idolatry; a third, the breadth of the phylacteries. A lawyer came to Jesus and asked Him which was the greatest commandment, testing His Rabbinical wisdom. Christ's

answer was disappointing, but it clinched the meaning of the text—"*Love.*" Love, not simply for human beings, but also for the lower animals, the despoiling of the bird's nest.

Here we have a lesson in :

I. ETHICS

There is a prejudice against scrupulosity. Scruple is from *scrupulus*—a stone or bit of gravel (no slight matter in the eyelid or in the shoe). So with a sensitive conscience. Pain follows and is a word of warning. Scruple to do right.

1. *We speak of little sins.*—There are none. How do we estimate the strength of a building? By taking the average of the beams and stone? Rather the stone or the beam that has a flaw in it. How do we estimate the stanchness of a ship? By measuring its hulk? By calculating the trustworthiness of its clamps and rivets? Rather by finding its one worm-eaten plank. How do we estimate the strength of a bridge? By the imposing appearance of its piers and the bulk of its cables? Rather by the weakest link of its anchorage. How do we know the strength of the tiger's cage? By its weakest bar; for this lets the tiger out. Strength of character is measured in the same way. Find out the weak place where it yields to the besetting sin. "He that offendeth in one point is guilty of the whole law."

2. *We speak of small duties.*—There are none. Obligation has in it the sanctity of Divine edict, the least as well as the greatest. Do this, or do that, says the voice within. Character depends upon heeding it. In the cathedral at Modena there is a bucket which belonged to the public well. Soldiers, in a frolic, stole it. It passed

from hand to hand, and finally it came into the possession of the young Prince Henry of Sardinia. A battle was fought to secure it and the prince was made prisoner. His imperial father offered a gold chain seven miles long for his ransom. It was refused. The prince lay twenty years in prison, pined away, and died. Meanwhile a war was fomented, in which most of the nations of Europe engaged and thousands of lives were lost. There are no trifles in human life. Their issue is beyond human ken. "How far yon little candle throws its beams!"

II. KINDNESS

Advantage is not to be taken of the mother bird by reason of her solicitude for her brood. The species must not be extirpated.

1. *Here is a question of rights.*—Has a dumb creature rights? Jeremy Bentham says, in reply: "Can they suffer?" Anything that suffers has rights. Theodore Parker, when a lad, saw a turtle on a log, and, with stone in hand, he crept up and was about to throw it, when he heard a voice within and he could not throw it. He asked his mother about it. She told him that it was the protest of the doctrine of rights—the voice of God.

2. *Here is a question of privilege.*—Thoreau, of Concord, went out to dwell in the woods near Walden Pond. He had neither gun nor rod. The animals found him out. The squirrels came and nestled under his vest. The very fish seemed to know him. There was an understanding between him and dumb creatures, and all the world loves Thoreau the better for it.

Abraham Lincoln, going the rounds of the circuit court with a number of fellow attorneys, came upon a mire in which a wretched swine was struggling for its

freedom. The sight provoked laughter. Lincoln was silent. After awhile he said: "I don't know how you feel about it, gentlemen, but I've got to go back." He did go back, and went into that mire and rescued that animal. It was the same kind of feeling that led him to liberate the Southern slave—an act which made him immortal.

3. *Here is a question of Christian principle.*—The good Samaritan practised it. A man's cat and dog are better off for it. The ancient mariner at the door of the festal hall said:

> "Farewell, farewell, but this I tell
> To thee, thou wedding guest:
> He prayeth well who loveth well
> Both man and bird and beast.
>
> "He prayeth best who loveth best
> All things, both great and small;
> For the dear God who loveth us,
> He made and loveth all."

III. INCREASE OF FAITH

In this small precept we have a deep insight into the mind of God.

He cares for the tiniest insect as well as for the mightiest world.

"Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing?" He saw sparrows, plucked and strung on a willow twig, exposed for sale at the gates of Jerusalem. Then came that blessed word, "Shall he not much more care for you, O ye of little faith!" "The very hairs of your head are all numbered."

Molinæus took refuge in an oven on the night of the massacre of St. Bartholomew. A spider wove its web

over it. A gust of wind filled it with dust. The dew next morning glistened on it. His pursuers passed by, saying, "He is not here." Had God nothing to do with that?

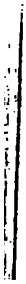
1. *There is the burden of care.*—Jesus says, "Take no anxious thought." Rest in God. Wait on Him. He will lead into the light.

2. *There is anxiety about the future.*—"Be not afraid," says Jesus. Why should we fear? He who taught us to remember the mother bird and her fledgling young will be mindful of us. There are giants in the way, and tho we can not cope with them, He will be with us to direct the pebble and the victory will be ours.

"Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief."



DOCTRINAL SERMONS





XLIX

LET US GO ON

Therefore, leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection.
—HEBREWS vi: 1.

CHRISTIANITY is a life. As a doctrinal and ethical system it expresses itself in walk and conversation—a creed going about doing good.

All organic things are under the same law. A stone differs from a plant. A stone receives accretions from without, a plant is developed from the principle within. A man differs from a mummy. The mummy of old Rameses looks at you through the glass doors of the Boulak Museum as it looked at the wailing mourners who carried it past the pyramids to its burial four thousand years ago. The spiritual man is thrilled with a Divine vital principle as if touched with an electric spark. The necessity of unceasing growth is upon him.

So say the Scriptures. Life is *structural.* The chief thing is edification—temple building—the soul rising into a glorious fabric, fit for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

Christ's teachings pervade it. He likened it to leaven, the mustard seed. So Paul's echo of the same thought: "Your faith *groweth* exceedingly."

Paul here writes to the diaspora, the Jews scattered abroad. They had been bound by the ceremonial law and blinded by prejudice against spirituality. Christ

gave new life. Chains were broken. Eyes were opened. Songs of salvation thrilled on the lips: "Let us go on." By "leaving the principles" Paul did not mean that the Jews were to forsake or forget them, but to leave them as the plant leaves the root, as the brook leaves the mountain spring.

What are these principles?

I. SALVATION

The foundation of repentance and faith were laid. They were not to be laid over again. From that go on building.

Assurance. There is no such thing without the faith which saves. Then why worry and fret about it? "Go on." Trust as you "go on." Trust instantly, constantly. Do not keep pumping out the hold. Simply stop the leak and sail on.

Salvation is more than mere deliverance from death. It is a great word. It means entire *conformity* to God—that is, all the graces of character are involved. *Work* it out.

Work it out—

1. *With fear and trembling.*
2. *To its utmost results.*
3. *To its splendid fulfilment.*
4. *To its glorious consummation.*

Old fathers of art did their best working on the statues of their gods. One might carve a laughing child or a sporting satyr, but his masterpiece must be Olympian—a Jupiter Tonans, or a Venus rising from the sea.

We get our model from the Son of God. Our best is not from human models, however grand, for they are imperfect. Christ alone can claim the quality of perfection.

II. BELIEF

Rudimental and essential questions on the threshold of the Christian life, such as the existence of God, the divinity of Christ, the trustworthiness of the Scriptures, should be settled.

In war times if a man breathed a word against the Constitution of the United States he was in danger of Fort Lafayette. He was pointed at on the street. He was shunned in society. He was counted as disloyal. Such were met with in Biblical times in the realms of spiritual religion, but they were "ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth."

Stop threshing out old straw. There are plenty of yellow sheaves to thresh to some profit.

Church troubles and individual troubles are largely due to tedious discussion of long-settled truths. There is scarcely a denomination which is not fretted by logomachies as to baptism, the laying on of hands, the problems of eschatology, or the inspiration of the Word. If young people were to pursue their education on these lines they would never get beyond "b-a ba, k-e-r ker, baker."

Alfred Tennyson, as a lad in bib and tucker, played with A. B. C. blocks, built bridges and cathedrals with them; but as time passed he was busy with larger tasks. He passed on to practical applications. His A. B. C. grew into "Idylls of the King" and "In Memoriam." It would have been strange if, dying there in the moonlight, he had still been fumbling with his building-blocks. But no; he died with great thoughts in his brain and the open page of "Cymbeline" before him. Paul said, "When I was a child I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man I put away childish things."

On the Pillars of Hercules was written this legend: "*Ne Plus Ultra!*" Rather let us say "*Plus Ultra*" for ever and ever. There is always more beyond. The beyond is illimitable. Cruise round the fringes of the Mediterranean if you will, but do not fear to turn your prows toward the Pillars of Hercules and sail out toward the west.

III. DUTY

There are three rules which must be settled at the beginning of the Christian life:

1. *Do nothing knowingly to offend God.*
2. *Do nothing to offend thyself.*
3. *Do nothing to make others stumble.*

A jeweler can tell at a glance the difference between gold and pinchbeck. So the Christian should see at the right thing were he not in the habit of trifling with conscience. Small questionings should have but little if any place in our larger life. The growing boy outgrows his clothes. The best proof of growth is when a man gets beyond small scruples and meets his responsibilities.

Duty is a great matter. It is the sum total of Christian service. Duty is ethical purpose in perfection.

When Paul became a Christian he did not ask if he might visit the exhibitions of the stadium as he had been accustomed to do, or mingle in the Isthmian games, or continue to be a Jewish zealot, haling Christians to judgment and death. These things had been disposed of. A sunburst of the new life opened upon him. He had no desire for the former life. The new was better. "Lord, what wilt *thou* have me to do?"

Ethical questions in the small affairs of life are as fruitless as the task of the Danaides, who were doomed to draw water from a deep well and fill an immense sieve with it.

Minimum piety! What is there to show for it? What of the larger tasks? What of the great, dark, dying world which needs your energies?

Now a word of counsel:

1. *Begin.*—No life without the first principles. The difference between a Christian and a non-Christian is that one man is on his way to Jerusalem and another man only hopes to go to Jerusalem.

2. *Make the most of yourself.*—You have but one life, use its possibilities to the utmost. The Hebrews might have gone straight from Egypt to Canaan, but their sins and complainings hindered them; so to discipline them they were sent round about in the wilderness for forty years. Don't dance round the golden calves. Don't lust after the quails. Don't long for Egypt and its flesh-pots. Don't! Don't!! Don't!!! The palm-trees are waving just beyond on the farther shore. Possess the good land. "Go on."

3. *Be not discouraged.*—Rome was not built in a day. Character is of slow growth. Digging up the bulb of a plant does not hasten the blooming of the lily. Day does not break instantly. The stars vanish only one by one. Clouds change from black to gray, from gray to amber, from amber to crimson, from crimson to gold; the woodman's ax rings from the forest hills; smoke rises from the chimney; the dew sparkles on the grass; the birds sing; sounds of busy life come from afar—at last the world is awake. So the progress in the Christian life.

"LET US GO ON."

L

THE RESURRECTION HERE AND NOW

Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.

—John v: 25.

Jesus was addressing the Pharisees. He took them on their own ground, for they believed in the resurrection.

The Pharisees were at odds with the Sadducees on this doctrine.

Job believed it: "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and in my flesh I shall see God."

David sung it: "God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave."

Ezekiel had a foregleam of it: "Son of Man, can these dry bones live?" In the vision the dry bones did live and stood up as living men.

But in the text there is something different: "The hour cometh, *and now is.*" It is something that is taking place now—a spiritual resurrection. Christ uttered the same truth to Martha when he said, "I am the resurrection and the *life.*"

I. SIN IS DEATH

Death is spoken of as bondage. The sinner is an exile in a far country from home, happiness, and kindred, wasting his substance.

It is a debt. Bankruptcy. In the debtor's jail now. All are under sin—that is, *imprisoned.*

It is defilement. Filth. Foul disease that robs of self-respect, unpresentable before God. "From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores."

It is *spiritual* death. There is a semblance of life, but all the faculties and powers of the higher nature have lost their vigor.

An ice-floe drifted from the delta of the River Lena, on the northern coast of Siberia, clear across into Davis Strait. On this ice-floe was the body of one of the crew of the ill-fated *Jeannette.* If this man had come by the shortest route he had made a journey of three thousand five hundred miles; if by the longest, nearly seven thousand. A long journey for a dead man! Yet there are people all about us who are on their journey to eternity and are spiritually dead. They toil in our workshops and offices; they eat, drink, marry, and are given in marriage. They accumulate wealth, sit in places of authority, and the fear is that the end will be eternal death.

II. SALVATION IS A RENEWAL OF LIFE

"I come," said Jesus, "that you might have life, and have it more abundantly." He is the soul quickener. Lazarus found Him such as to his dead body. He found Him such as to his dead soul also.

1. *The eyes of the soul are opened at Christ's touch.*—A wealthy blind man in New York cried, "A million dollars to any one who will give me sight!"

A child blind from her birth was healed by a surgical operation. She was taken out upon the piazza of her summer home, and when the bandage was taken from

her eyes she looked out upon the meadows and hillsides, and the skies above, then said, "Oh, mother! is this heaven?" A moral beauty, like a revelation, has come to many a soul at the magic touch of the Divine hand. Life and immortality have come into view. "Spiritual things are spiritually discerned." "Receive thy sight," and heaven burst on the opened eyes of the blind man. He says, "Whereas I was blind now I see."

2. *Ears as well as eyes are opened at the touch of Jesus.*—The range of hearing is in seven octaves. If a sound does not make more than forty nor less than four thousand vibrations to the second we can not hear it. I know a man who has never heard the song of a bird. He is skeptical as to the sweet descant of the nightingale's voice. To him music is like the music of the spheres—a mere fable. Much of life's pleasures are denied him. Spiritual deafness of the spiritually dead is absolute.

The apostle says there are many voices in the world and none of them is without its significance. God speaks, angels sing, the multitudes declare the Divine goodness, but all this is outside the aural range of those dead in trespasses and in sins. But at the voice that utters the word "*Ephphatha*" ears are unstopped, and life comes in with all its heavenly sweetness.

3. *Spiritual appetite is quickened at the touch of Jesus.*—"I haven't been hungry for two years," said a man recently. People of this sort are taking tonics all the time to stimulate appetite. Much of the zest of living is lost to them. The same thing is true as to spiritual matters. The Bible to such has no attractions. They hear no melody in hymns that stir others to the very center of their being.

Desire has failed. Who shall quicken it? David, when

hunted like a partridge upon the mountains, saw a wounded deer bounding through the forest with an arrow quivering in its flank, eyes hot with fever, and hastening to the fountain. He cried: "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God!" "My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God." Alas, for those who have no thirst for the living waters! Jesus can change the desire, and He only.

4. *Jesus verifies the conscience.*—Conscience was intended to guide us aright. Sin has spoiled it. The needle in the compass is rusted. The moral sense has been struck with death. Under certain circumstances it wakes up in terror. Emperor Constance, with an untrembling hand, put his brother Theodosius to death, but in his exile the specter followed him everywhere, holding a cup of red, warm blood, saying: "Drink, brother, drink!" What a touch of remorse! Happy the man, however, whose conscience springs to life at the touch of Jesus. It then becomes a finger-board pointing to heaven's gate.

5. *Jesus energizes the will.*—The will is the center of moral nature. But sin paralyzes it. "The good that I would, I do not; and the evil I would not, that I do."

When the prodigal in the far-off country, ragged and famishing, first showed signs of returning to his father's house, he said: "I will arise and go." That was the beginning of life. He then began life's struggle, the beating down of old sins and passions and appetites.

An old-time Quaker had a strange experience at his conversion. When laid out for burial an angel, bending over him, said, softly: "The man is dead." Another laid his hand over his heart, and said: "It does not throb; he's dead." Another touched his flesh, and said: "It is cold; he is surely dead." So one by one the angels

came, till one kindlier than the rest looked upon him, lifted his hand, and ejaculated: "Nay, what is this? A nail-print in his palm; a nail-print in his other palm. This man is not dead; he has been crucified; crucified with Christ, and lives with Him." The Quaker awoke, and found the passage: "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, Christ liveth in me."

We live spiritually, and that is the true resurrection *here* and *now*.

LI

ASSURANCE

Give diligence to make your calling and election sure.

—II. Peter 1: 10.

ELECTION is one of God's state secrets. One of the ancient stoics used to go about holding something in his left hand covered with a napkin. Paul Pry wanted to know what it was. The stoic's reply was: "Hence the napkin." That was all. So God does not tell.

Election is a fact, tho. That is enough to the believer. "Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son. Whom he did predestinate, them he also called. Whom he called, them he also justified. Whom he justified, them he also glorified."

Personal assurance proves the fact. All believers do not have this assurance always. All believers have it sometimes. None may be without it.

How is it to be had?

I. BY THE WITNESS OF THE SPIRIT

"The spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God."

A witness testifies to *facts*. He must not guess, nor

speculate, nor give an opinion. The Holy Spirit has looked into the Book of Life. He has seen the believer's name there and He tells him of it.

Jesus told the paralytic that his sins were forgiven. He said the same thing to a penitent woman. He told the thief on the cross that he would be with Him that day in Paradise. If this is not so, Jesus did not speak the truth. We can not conceive of Jesus being other than a truth-teller. When He went away the Holy Spirit came in His place as a witness of what Jesus said, and to carry out the promises of Jesus. Be sure that it is the Spirit that speaks. There are other voices that speak. James tells us to try the spirits whether they are of God. The inner voice of mere emotion is not the voice of the Spirit. The Spirit's witness produces emotion, but emotion is not the Spirit. The Spirit is an intelligence, an Infinite Intelligence. And this Infinite Intelligence is God Himself. When He says, "Thy sins are forgiven," it is so. There can be no appeal from Him. He is ultimate authority.

When John Wesley was preaching in Georgia, Spangler, a Moravian pastor, asked him if he had the witness of the Spirit. Wesley was surprised and nonplussed. He said, "Do you know that Jesus is your Savior?"

"Aye, I know that He is the Savior of the world, that he tasted death for every man."

"But do you know that Jesus is *your* Savior?"

"I hope so."

"But do you *know* so?"

Wesley was troubled. He prayed. He put away all that stood between him and God; then he wrote:

"The Spirit answers to the blood,
And tells me I am born of God."

Is there any other testimony? Yes,

II. THE WITNESS OF THE WORD

The Scriptures are the last court of appeal in matters of faith and of the genuineness of Christian experience. Mere sentiment is of no value. Tears and hosannas are not evidence.

A child walks on a twelve-inch plank laid across the street without fear of falling off. If laid across from the top of two high buildings, not many of us could walk over it without losing our balance. There is nothing beneath it, and away goes our confidence.

Christian hope must rest on something. Listen:

"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life."

"Except a man be born again he can not see the Kingdom of God."

"Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you."

"We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren."

"If any man will come after me let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me."

"Go, sell all that thou hast, and come and follow me."

"Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin."

"As many as are led by the Spirit of God they are the sons of God."

There are multitudes of other passages similar to these. The Christian, born of God, is of noble blood. The reason why Tichborne failed to get possession of the great estate was because the whole demeanor of the man showed that he was not of noble blood.

The Crusaders wore the red cross on their arms, but

the true believer wears it in his heart and bears it on his shoulders.

A child knows whether he loves his mother. If I suspect the validity of a piece of my property I do not fret and worry about it, but go straight to the abstract office and find out. The Book is our abstract of title to heavenly mansions. Its judgment is final.

There is still another witness:

III. THE WITNESS OF FAITH

"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee; because he trusteth in thee."

Self-examination is profitable, but too much of it makes us restless and unbelieving. Look out, not in. Up, not down. The secret of a happy life is to trust God.

Faith shows itself in two ways:

1. *Its work.*—We are invited into the vineyard. To look about simply and admire it? To sit under a shade-tree and talk about its owner—his wisdom and generosity? To eat the fruit and pluck a few flowers to wear in the buttonhole of one's coat? Oh, no! *Work* is the word. Lazy fellows and dudes are not needed there.

Paul was a worker. And he is the Apostle of Assurance. After years of toil, he said: "I know whom I have believed, and that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him." He is an old and feeble man; but what tranquillity on the brink of death! He was awaiting the footfall of the executioner. His faith was like an oak, rooted more deeply by the tempest that swept over it. He looked back to the time when he encountered Jesus on the Damascus road, and then and there began the new life—a life of hard and constant toil.

Faith also shows itself:

2. *In Rest.*—If we apprehend Christ we shall trust Him. Why, then, fret? Why worry? Why struggle?

I have a friend who made a vain effort to save a drowning woman. He struck out beyond the white crest of the surf and reached her. She frantically threw her arms about his neck. He tore them off. She clutched his hair. He broke loose. "I could have saved her," said he, "but she struggled so." No soul was ever lost who calmly trusted God. We are in His hands.

The Christian who fled from the City of Destruction quietly rested in the Chamber of Peace. He awoke in the morning and looked out upon the Delectable Mountains, and then sang:

> "Where am I now? Is this the love and care
> Of Jesus for the men who pilgrims are—
> Thus to provide that I should be forgiven,
> And dwell already the next door to heaven?"

Jesus said: "Peace I leave with you. My peace I give unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

LII

ORTHODOXY

But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine.

—Titus ii: 1.

NO MAN has a right to force a creed upon another, neither may he receive it at second hand. "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." Respect the Church and Council, but think for yourself. "Let no man take thy crown."

Orthodoxy is not a slavish subscription to creeds. Tradition counts, of course. A farmer would be a fool if he ignored new labor-saving inventions and stuck to the crooked stick as a plow, threshed his grain with a flail and ground it with a pestle and mortar. He might be independent, but he would not be bright.

A dwarf can see farther than a giant if he stands on the giant's shoulders, but he must see through his own eyes, not the giant's. Climb up on the shoulders of the past, but, when there, look for yourself.

Orthodoxy is not Bœotian credulity. Callow folk assume that all clever people are heretics, and that heresy is necessary to progress, as if locomotives could not go except down-grade with open brakes.

It is not the wild rovers of the sea that find El Dorados, but such as sail by chart and compass.

Orthodoxy is associated with noble history. Men have loved truth better than life. It was so with Abel, who followed his convictions and was slain for them; with Abram, who left home and country; with the three

Babylonian youths, who were not afraid of the sevenfold heated furnace; with the reformers of all the ages. Jesus faced the cross for the same reason.

But can orthodoxy be definitely defined? A case came before the courts in Baltimore awhile ago. The bulk of an estate was left for the erection of an edifice for "the worship of Jesus Christ according to the orthodox Baptist faith." The judge said that the court could not determine what orthodoxy is in the absence of a State Church. Legally it could not be defined, but that is no reason to suppose that it has no definite ecclesiastical definition.

True, the word does not appear in the Scriptures; nor does the word "Creed" or "Incarnation" for that matter. But Paul says to Titus: "Speak thou the things that become sound doctrine." "Sound doctrine" is summed up in *orthe doxa.*

Historically, it means loyalty to the creed of a particular body. An orthodox Mohammedan is one who believes in one God and Mohammed His prophet. An orthodox Unitarian is one who does not believe in the divinity of Jesus Christ. An orthodox Episcopalian is one who believes in the Thirty-nine Articles. An orthodox Reformed or Presbyterian is one who believes in the Calvinistic theses, such as the Canons of Dort and the Westminster Confession of Faith.

An orthodox Christian is one who believes in the truths held in common by the universal Church.

Observe:

I. THE LIFE OF CHRISTIAN ORTHODOXY IS CHRIST

He is the Alpha and Omega. A man is not an orthodox Christian simply because he believes in Christ. A

humanitarian goes as far as that. Others extol Christ's character and life and set Him up wholly as an example for men to follow, and say, "Why discuss the matter further?" The Scriptures, to a large extent, are set aside. Christ must not be dismembered. He is more than an exemplar in benevolence. He is Priest, Prophet, and King. To reject him in either of these points is to reject Him *in toto*.

1. *He offers Himself as Priest.*—He makes expiation for sin on Calvary, therefore is a substitute for sinful men. He takes His heart out of His own bosom and lays it throbbing on the altar. If we believe in Christ we must believe in His atoning blood. "He was wounded for our transgressions."

2. *He is our Prophet.*—Our great Teacher. He has something to say as to God, sin, spiritual death, life, and immortality, the resurrection of the body, and the final judgment. His word is the court of last appeal.

3. *He is our King.*—"Ye call me Master and Lord; and so I am." He speaks of our manner of life, of the sacramental table, and of evangelizing the world. We are to obey Him, for His word is authority.

II. THE SYMBOL OF CHRISTIAN ORTHODOXY IS THE BIBLE

1. *The Scriptures are the only authoritative source of information respecting Christ.*—Christ without the Scriptures is a mere name and meaningless, except for sentimental uses.

Do you believe in Christ? Yes.

What Christ? The Christ of history.

Where may belief for such authority be found? In the Bible.

Do you mean the New Testament? As a true believer you would reply, "Yes, in both the Old and New Testaments." As it takes two hemispheres to make a world, so it requires two Testaments to make one complete record of Christ. But why believe the Scriptures? Is it not enough that He is all and in all to me? No. Christ as the *incarnate* word and the Scriptures as the *written* word make a complete revelation. Yours is not the religion of a book, but Christ is reliably described in a book.

It is like this: You tell the water commissioner that you want water in your house. He answers, "Don't worry, we will have the pipes put in right away." Who said anything about pipes? It is water you want. But you get water through pipes. It is pipes or no water. So, it is Bible or no Christ. That is the medium through which Christ comes authoritatively to us.

2. *Christ received the Scriptures as setting forth the plan of salvation which centers in Him.*—He quoted Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Samuel, Kings, Chronicles, Psalms, Proverbs, Song of Solomon, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and most of the minor prophets. He made reference to Adam and Eve, Abel, Noah, the Flood, Abraham, the Destruction of Sodom, Lot's Wife, Jacob's Ladder, the Burning Bush, the Manna, the Brazen Serpent, the Queen of Sheba, and Jonah. He never hinted that any part of the Scriptures was not trustworthy. Either He did not know as much as our modern critics or else He intended to deceive. If we accept Christ we must accept His Word. The conclusion is irresistible.

3. *He commended the Scriptures as decisive.*—"Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me." Search with

the help of all attainable light of scholarship. Search by heartfelt experience. Search through the help of the Holy Spirit.

III. THE ADMINISTRATOR OF CHRISTIAN ORTHODOXY IS THE HOLY SPIRIT

1. *He reveals the truth of the Scriptures.*—I stand in the wheel-house of an ocean steamer looking bewildered on the marine reports which are written in cipher and hieroglyphics. But the captain makes all plain. He holds the key. So the Scriptures are an unknown tongue to unaided wisdom. The Holy Spirit makes them clear. He opens eyes and gives light—light on the Incarnation, Calvary, Resurrection, Love.

2. *He leads us into all truth.*—If we have fallen into error, it is because either we have failed to consult the Holy Spirit, or we have been unwilling to be guided by Him. "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not." There is a desperate and intolerable pride of human wisdom which opposes the work of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit came in the place of Christ, and speaks to our consciousness as Jesus spoke to men in the days of His flesh.

Think more kindly of orthodoxy. Recently it has been the fashion to deride it. The new school of thinkers has smeared its face with phosphorus, crowned it with cap and bells, and put it in the stocks to be mocked at. But, moved by the love of truth, devotion to principle, and fealty to God, let us uncover and do obeisance as we pass by.

LIII

THE OLD BOOK AND THE NEW CENTURY

The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field; the grass withereth, the flower fadeth, because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it; surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth; but the word of our God shall stand forever.

—ISAIAH xl: 6-8.

THE Greeks, a hundred thousand strong, crossed the Ægean in a thousand ships and encircled ancient Troy. Catapults were planted on surrounding hills, from which great stones were hurled through the air. With the use of battering rams the outer ramparts were penetrated, but only to find that the Trojans were secure in their citadel.

Strategy was then resorted to. A wooden horse, purporting to be a propitiatory offering to Athena, but really containing a band of Greek warriors, was received by the unsuspecting Trojans within their citadel. At night the warriors issued forth and opened the gates to the beleaguered hosts, and thus Troy fell.

The citadel of our religion is the Bible. The fiercest assaults of Antichrists have been directed against it. Enemies of the truth still challenge it.

The eighteenth century saw a storm of infidelity. The Reign of Terror in France swept away the moral law.

The legislature declared that there was no God and no Sabbath. Voltaire said: "I am going through the forests of your Christian doctrines and I will girdle every tree, so that presently not a sapling shall be left to you." All Europe aped France's freethinkers.

At that time our own country felt its force.

Thomas Paine brought the manuscript of the "Age of Reason" to Benjamin Franklin, who said, "Do not unloose that tiger; if our people are what they are with the Bible, what will they be without it?" But the tiger was let loose. In the beginning of the nineteenth century a great tidal wave of infidelity swept over the country. In 1800 Yale College had but three professing Christians among its students.

The twentieth century comes in amid a similar tempest.

There is a great difference in the methods pursued. The assault is not from without, as a century ago, but from within. There is an ominous silence in the Trojan camp. Bradlaugh in England and Ingersoll in America were the last of the old guard. Open warfare has given way to strategy. The Trojan horse has been brought within the walls, and not a few theological professors and ministers of the Gospel have attempted to draw the bolts of the citadel gates. If the Bible is overthrown Christianity falls.

Let us review the salient points of the controversy:

I. AS TO THE LITERARY VALUE OF THE BIBLE

Where will you find such poetry? Milton said, "There are no songs like the songs of Zion."

Or such oratory? Daniel Webster said, "If there is aught of eloquence in me, it is because I learned the Scriptures at my mother's knee."

Or such logic? Lord Bacon said, "There is no philosophy like that of the Scriptures."

Or unity and completeness of beauty and power? Froude said, "The Bible is in and of itself a liberal education."

Or what book or books can compare with it? Sir Walter Scott said, "Bring me the book." "What book?" "There is but one book—the Bible."

II. AS TO THE SCIENCE OF SCRIPTURE

Tho it is not a scientific book, yet what is said in it of science is accurate. Some scientific men decry the Bible. But set over against them such scientists as Descartes, Locke, Newton, Faraday, Dana, Agassiz, Lord Kelvin, and many others worthy of equal mention. Dana, addressing the Class of 1867, said: "Young men, you are going out into a world where you must meet an increasing attack upon your faith. Let me ask you to remember, as my parting counsel, that whenever you are in doubt amid the confused voices of scientific controversy, you may always with perfect confidence affix your faith to any statement of the Word of God."

The Scriptural doctrine of origins, "In the beginning, etc.," has been assailed. But the scientists themselves differ. Darwin asserted that "evolution is as yet a mere hypothesis." You can not batter down Gibralter with a bulrush.

Then there is Antogenesis, or beginning without a God. Experimentalists hold to this doctrine. I will yield to that when any of them will create so much as a grain of mustard seed, or the most infinitesimal and simplest formed of animalculæ. Until then we may be pardoned if we hold to the Bible declaration as to beginnings.

III. AS TO THE HISTORICITY OF THE BIBLE

There are objections to the Pentateuch. Moses, they say, could not have written it, because the art of writing was unknown in his day. But the excavations at Tel-el-Amarna show that Babylonian kings were corresponding with each other a century before Moses was born.

The story of the Pharaohs and Israel is unhistoric. But the sepulchres of Thebes have been opened, and in the Museum of Boulak the mummy of old Meneptah, the Pharaoh of the Exodus, ends the argument.

The story of Balaam and Balak is fabulous, since the Jews and Moabites spoke different tongues. But the finding of the Moabite stone reveals the fact that the Jews and the Moabites spoke kindred dialects of the Hebrew.

The Hittites were a myth, because they were nowhere spoken of except in the Bible. But royal seals and cylinders of the Hittites have been dug up, and show that this people contended for the mastery among the nations.

So the Pentateuch remains.

IV. AS TO THE THEOLOGY OF THE BIBLE

That is, the doctrine of God. There are no atheists, as in the last century. New gods have sprung up. They are called by different names—as, Energy, Force, Law, the All-pervading Soul of the Universe, a Something not Ourselves that Maketh for Righteousness—anything but the God of Creation, of Providence, and of Grace. All are mere specters.

The result is just what it was in ancient Greece when Paul went there. The Bible's God, and none other, can satisfy human needs.

V. AS TO THE ETHICS OF THE BIBLE

The moral code for centuries has passed through the flames of controversy. It does not even have the smell of fire upon it.

The two great ethical symbols of the Bible are the Decalog and the Sermon on the Mount.

Who is bold enough to pass adverse judgment upon the Ten Commandments? Who will presume to criticize the Sermon on the Mount?

These two can do two things:

1. *Make a nation.*—Time and experience prove it.

2. *Make men.*—Christ is the perfect man, an illustration of the perfect law, an exemplar to all right-thinking and right-living men. To imitate Christ is character, to follow Him is usefulness. A true Christian is, as Alexander Pope says, "the highest style of Man."

VI. AS TO THE PLOT OF THE DRAMA

The Book is a drama, with a purpose running through it, clear, progressive, climacteric as the theme of an oratorio. It begins at Paradise. We follow it through Chronicle and Psalm and Prophecy. There is a lapse; then comes suddenly a gush of music on the Judean hills, followed in a few years by the tragedy of Calvary. Then another gush of music from the heavenly heights: "Worthy art thou to receive honor and glory and power and dominion for ever and ever, for thou wast slain and hast redeemed us by thy blood." The crimson path runs from Genesis to Finis. Here is the rational escape from the guilty past.

VII. AS TO THE CENTRAL FIGURE OF THE BIBLE

Has the adverse criticism of the century robbed us of our Christ? Nay, He still remains our peerless Lord.

"If the life and death of Socrates were those of a sage," said Rousseau, "the life and death of Jesus were those of a God."

A Hall of Fame has recently been instituted in connection with New York University, and a score of names are chosen to be inscribed in its granite columns. But by what a bridgeless gulf is Jesus separated from them all!

Napoleon said, when in exile: "My life once shone with the brilliance of a diadem, but now who cares for me? Cæsar, Alexander, and I dreamed of universal empire. Where are they? I shall soon be forgotten. But Jesus died eighteen centuries ago after founding an empire of love, and at this hour there are millions of men who would die for Him."

The old Book stands like Eddystone Lighthouse, despite all swirling tides and buffeting storms, casting a steady light over the broad seas. The citadel stands too. Its walls are intact, and its bolts have not been drawn by treachery within. Over it floats the red banner of the cross.

A hundred years ago Lord Chesterfield, while visiting in Paris, was entertained by a lady of distinction, but a bitter foe of Christianity. She said: "My lord, I am informed that your English Parliament is composed of five or six hundred of the most profound and brilliant thinkers. Will you explain to me why, under their authority, the Bible is still recognized in the legislation of your country, and the obsolete religion of the Nazarene is maintained as the State religion?" He answered: "Madam, this is a mere temporary makeshift; we are casting about for something better, and when that is discovered the Bible and Christianity must go."



The world has been casting about for centuries for something better, but has not found it yet.

Sinners will seek salvation in the Bible, and the troubled will continue to seek shelter under its protecting wings. "All flesh is as grass: the grass withereth, the flower fadeth; but the word of our God shall stand forever."

LIV

OFFENDED IN CHRIST

From that time many of his disciples went back and walked no more with him.

—John vi:66.

JESUS had just performed the miracle of the loaves and fishes, and the miracle of walking upon the sea and stilling the storm.

It was the time when the great multitudes were thronging the thoroughfares on their way to the feast of the Passover in Jerusalem. Some of them thought it a good time to get even with the Roman government and place this wonder-worker on the Davidic throne. But He got away from them, rebuked them, said that they followed Him about for the loaves and fishes; and then He delivered the most searching discourses touching the deepest problems of life. From that moment many were offended in Him, dropped away one by one, until He was left with a mere handful of the faithful.

The offense was:

I. OF THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST'S DIVINITY

They said, "Whence camest thou?" He replied, "I came down from heaven." "The Father sent me." Here was a declaration of His preexistence. This perplexed and bewildered them.

We must either accept this truth or turn back.

Some would receive Him as a prophet who had a message. The rabbis were amazed at His blasphemy. The common people were pleased with Him. This may be admitted and Christ rejected still. We must go further or turn back.

His claims were explicit: as expressed to the woman at the well, to Philip, to the young ruler, and to many others. It was Godhood or nothing.

II. OF JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH

Jesus said: "I am the bread of life." This was suggested, perhaps, by the miracle of the loaves. The meaning is plain.

1. *He was the savior from sin.*—Bread is the staff of life. Sin brought death into the world. Jesus brought life. He is "the way, the truth, and the life." "The bread which is my flesh." This bread must be broken. It was broken on Calvary. "He was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities." Our sins broke His heart. He died. But out of that came life.

2. *The condition of life.*—"He that believeth shall be saved." Faith is acceptance. It was not the lamb on the altar that averted the sword of the destroying angel, but the blood on the door-posts. It is not bread on the table that satisfies hunger, but bread eaten, assimilated, so that it becomes brain, bone, sinew—our very selves.

A thousand excuses are given for rejecting Christ. Back of them all is the natural repugnance to free grace. Our pride revolts at salvation without money and without price. It was easier to undertake a pilgrimage to Mecca or the Ganges than to be saved *gratis*. To the Jews it was a stumbling-block and to the Greeks foolishness.

III. OF THE DOCTRINE OF THE KINGDOM

When they murmured, He said, "Does this offend you?" "What and if ye shall see the Son of Man ascending up where He was before?"—that is, to resume His glory.

Perhaps it was too much to expect the people to receive this truth just then. They were familiar with Him as a carpenter in homespun. They may even have seen Him in the shop mending plows and the broken furniture of His neighbors. They were willing to bestow upon Him the Judean crown, but to claim a crown of stars and the kings of earth to bring their glory and honor to Him was a hard saying.

No such reason now exists for rejecting Christ. Time has changed popular opinion. He now rules. The conquest of the Sudan, the rending asunder of China, the partition of Africa are mere episodes along the march of universal triumph.

The visible token of Christ's Kingdom is the Church. This is the miracle of the ages. That insignificant number in the upper chamber has multiplied, like the loaves and fishes, into the millions. The air is resonant with the chorus,

"All hail the power of Jesus' name."

The progress of the past is a foregleam of the future. The whole world is to fall before Him as the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

The man who undertakes to reason against the logic of events has a hopeless task before him. As Alexander the Great was advancing through the Orient, he asked of a provincial governor the privilege of passing through his

territory. The answer was: "I will call my counselors and deliberate." The great conqueror retorted: "You may deliberate, but I shall be marching on."

Men may set aside the claims of Christ, but He will march along just the same. It was not without pain that He beheld men one by one leaving Him; for to the few that were left He asked the pathetic question, "Will ye also go away?"

The profoundest question we can put to ourselves is, "To whom shall we go?" Who has life besides Christ? Can any other save? He alone has eternal life. Blessed are they who are not offended in Him!

LV

YOM KIPPUR

And this shall be a statute forever unto you: that in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, ye shall afflict your souls, and do no work at all, whether it be one of your own country, or a stranger that sojourneth among you; for on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the Lord.

—Leviticus xvi: 29, 30.

YOM KIPPUR is the Jewish day of atonement. Every Jewish household on that day sacrifices a fowl as a sin-offering, saying, "May this be my substitute."

The interest is centered on three events: (1) the usual morning sacrifice, (2) an offering by the high priest for himself and his brethren in the holy office, (3) the atonement for the people.

The ceremony sets forth:

I. THE TREMENDOUS FACT OF SIN

1. *Sin is universal.*—In the old red sandstone the traces of rain drops may be seen. They indicate which way the wind blew at the time when the stone was mud on the surface of the earth. So in human nature we note a record of bygone events. All people bear the mark of a moral tempest. In their clay there is the sign of the serpent's trail.

2. *Sin is distributive.* Physicians say that no one is perfectly well, tho all may not have the same disease.

The moral malady is just the same. We are sick with an illness that will ultimately terminate in death. "There is none that doeth good; no, not one."

3. *Sin is all-pervasive.*—The venom of the cobra enters the blood and poisons every part of it. So sin defiles the heart, distorts reason, perverts conscience, and paralyzes the will. "The whole head is sick and the whole heart faint; from the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores."

4. *The end of sin is inevitable.*—Its operation is slow but sure, like the movement of a glacier. The Swiss can not oppose the glacier by bracing himself against it nor by placing a barricade against it. It is simply irresistible.

II. THE IMPRESSIVE FACT OF THE ATONEMENT

Blood-atonement is as universal as sin. Yet there is no virtue in the blood itself. Back of it is LOVE. Christ is is the atoning sacrifice, but love led Him to the Cross.

Notice:

1. *The high priest in his garment of holiness.*—He who makes atonement for sin must himself be free from it. This was symbolized in the high priest bathing himself and the putting on of spotless white garments. Jesus was "without spot and blemish."

2. *The blood of the sacrifice.*—Life for the guilty by the death of the innocent! Payment must be the equivalent of the debt. The violation of law demands the infliction of the penalty. Christ, the infinite, was adequate in both cases.

3. *The scapegoat.*—The high priest having transferred the sins of the people to the goat, it was led forth to Azazel, the land of separation, and lost forever. So the

sins of every believer are laid on Jesus. He carries them away, and they are lost to view forever. They are remembered no more.

III. THE IMPORTANT PERSONAL FACTOR

The high priest represented the people. So Christ is our representative. But He must be appropriated by faith.

A few years ago a party of Americans ascended Mont Blanc. They were overtaken by a storm and lost their way. Every one perished within twelve feet of shelter. Five steps would have saved them. One step only is necessary to save us. The supreme moment in the history of every sinner is when he takes that step. Jesus says: "COME." Answer: "I WILL."

LVI

HE SHALL SO COME

> **And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.**
>
> —ACTS i : 10, 11.

FORTY days after His resurrection Christ went up to the Mount of Olives. A group of His followers were to meet Him there by appointment.

Some conversation took place between them. They wanted to know when He would restore the kingdom of Israel. He did not tell them; instead, He renewed to them the promise of the Holy Spirit, and commanded them to preach the Gospel everywhere.

Just then a strange thing happened. He began to rise from the earth, continued rising up above their heads, higher still, clear into the clouds; then vanished out of sight.

While thus gazing in inexpressible wonderment, two men in white appeared and said that this same Jesus would come again as they had seen Him go away.

The spell was broken. The disciples returned to Jerusalem, and told what they had seen and heard. From that day a great change took place in them. They became bold as lions. They went about fearlessly proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Observe:

I. JESUS WILL RETURN

As certain as He had gone. He Himself predicted it. Peter preached it.

An old man a hundred miles from the nearest water built a boat. It took him one hundred and twenty years to finish the task. Meanwhile he was exhorting the people to repent, for God was about to send a destructive flood. They made sport of him: "Old man, what are the signs of the weather? A fine boat this! When will you launch her?" But the flood came—came suddenly, unexpectedly.

Scripture says that Christ shall so come.

II. JESUS WILL COME VISIBLY

Human eyes saw Him go. They shall also see Him come. "Every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him."

Listen to the opening of the sixth seal of the Apocalypse: "And, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig-tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places." And the kings and potentates and mighty men came forth.

These were the opponents of Christ. See the change! And they called upon the mountains and the rocks, saying, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb."

The wrath of the Lamb! Meekness on fire with holy indignation!

The head once crowned with thorns is now crowned with glory.

I remember as a lad hearing the story of an old woman who had stood in the procession that welcomed Washington on his return from war. Her dim eyes kindled with enthusiasm as she told of the splendors of that day. The village girls clad in white, with red sashes and silver stars and green garlands, cast flowers in the path of the conqueror. But what will be the gladness of that day when Christ comes in superlative splendor to receive His own and to reign King over all!

III. JESUS WILL COME PERSONALLY

Not merely in spiritual manifestation or in demonstration of His moral power, but *in propria persona*. "This same Jesus whom ye have seen go into heaven shall so come."

The blending of Deity and humanity in the incarnation was not for a temporary purpose. He is *theanthropos* forever—one with us in an eternal purpose. His eyes, hands, feet, and heart are just the same as in the days of His flesh.

We shall identify Him by His scars. John saw Him as the "Lamb that had been slain"—

> "Five bleeding wounds He bears,
> Received on Calvary;
> They pour effectual prayers,
> They strongly plead for me."

But His body, tho identical with the one He bore here, is changed. It was changed somewhere between Mount

Olivet and heaven. It was fitted for the spiritual realm. All things are adjusted to their environment. The butterfly and the caterpillar are the same, only the former was fitted to fly and the latter to crawl. The root in the earth is the potency of the flower; bulb and tuberose are the same, only the bulb's home is in the earth and the tuberose fills the atmosphere with beauty and fragrance. So the body of Jesus is the same in heaven as on earth, only it has undergone the metamorphosis necessary to its environment there.

So it will be with us. "Behold I show you a mystery: we shall be changed in a moment." "Behold, now are we sons of God; but it doth yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is."

IV. JESUS WILL COME GLORIOUSLY

There are three tokens of the splendor of His advent:

1. *The trumpet.*—The herald goes before with the announcement of the King's coming.

2. *The cloud.*—Not the dust-cloud rising from the rolling of the chariot, but the Shekinah of the Lord, the cloud that stood above the tabernacle when Israel traveled through the wilderness, the cloud that enveloped the disciples on the Mount of Transfiguration. The cloud that served as His pavilion shall be the chariot of the King.

3. *The retinue of angels.*—When He came to Bethlehem a mother bent over His cradle, a few rustics looked in through the stable door, a group of shepherds knelt beside Him, and a company of wise men were there with gifts. A few fishermen and other humble folk followed Him afterward when He journeyed through Palestine.

One bright spring day in the year of our Lord 29, when His disciples and a multitude of pilgrims turned the spur of Olivet and came in sight of the domes of Jerusalem, they proclaimed Him King. But at His final appearing the shining seats of heaven will be emptied to furnish His retinue, the skies will glow with gilded chariots, the clouds will wave like banners, and He will be followed by the white squadron, ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands, crying: "Worthy art thou to receive honor and glory and power and dominion for ever and ever!"

V. JESUS WILL COME BENEFICENTLY

He came first to redeem the world. "It is finished," He said on the cross. The work will go on to its final consummation: "The restoration of all things."

1. *On that day sin will be destroyed.*
2. *The wicked shall be banished to their own place.*
3. *Christ shall take His place on the throne.*
4. *The Golden Age will then begin.*—But when? 'Tis folly to predict. "As the lightning cometh, so also shall be the coming of the Son of Man."

It was predicted that the end of the world would come at the close of the tenth century. At that time there were famines, plagues, wars, and the breaking up of social order. At the approach of the year one thousand the people with one consent prepared for the second coming of Christ. All work was suspended and the land left untilled. Henry, the Emperor of Germany, came down from his throne, donned a monk's cowl, and went preaching "Repent, for the Kingdom of God is at hand." Crowds slept in the porches and under the shadow of cathedrals. Thus the last night of the year was reached.

Streets, open fields, and monastery roofs were filled with people watching the skies. Hours went by. Morning came. But no visible Christ! The world rose from its paralysis. Then the crusades began. New plans of royal conquest were formulated, which gave birth to the medieval cathedrals to bear witness to the enthusiasm of a world born anew into the hope of a vigorous life.

Prophetic arithmetic is a useless employment. The key of Daniel's mystical figures hangs on God's girdle. This is what we should do: Watch! Pray! Trust!

On the famous "dark day" in 1780 the General Assembly of the State of Connecticut in session at Hartford was alarmed. It was whispered that the world was coming to an end. Colonel Davenport had the place lighted, saying, "If this is indeed the end of the world I am sure the Master can find us no better employed than in attending to our appointed tasks." Wise words!

May the Master find us ready when He comes!

LVII

THE GOLDEN PASSIONAL

> When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.
>
> —ISAIAH liii : 10.

ISAIAH was called a bird of ill omen because he denounced the sins of the people.

He had visions—visions of darkness and visions of light, visions of disaster and visions of deliverance.

The chosen people neglected the temple and frequented the temple of the unclean Astarte.

Then came the retribution. Plagues, famines, hostile incursions, and spoliations.

The scene changes. The miserere becomes a gloria. The Trinity is moved at the cry of distress. Then comes the cradle scene of Bethlehem, the crossing of the ways, the shepherd on the mountain, the man of war approaching from a distance, having trod the wine-press alone, the herald's voice crying in the wilderness, and, finally, the *via dolorosa*.

A mysterious figure is borne down under an intolerable burden, the vicarious sacrifice is offered. Polycarp calls this the Golden Passional.

I. THE BURDEN-BEARER

Seven hundred years after Isaiah's vision Philip heard a voice telling him to go to Gaza by the desert road.

Obeying, he heard the rumbling of chariot wheels. The chancellor of Queen Candace is the occupant, reading the prophecy of Isaiah, and wonders who this mysterious person is. Is it Isaiah himself or some one else? Philip explains it to mean the Messiah. The great man receives Him, is baptized, and then goes on his way to his country, rejoicing in a new-found savior, to tell it to others.

He who finds Christ finds all. Nor can he keep it to himself.

II. THE BURDEN

The world's sin is the burden. Christ is the sacrificial offering for that sin.

1. *Sin is a tremendous fact.*—Your sin and mine. All feel the shame and torture of it. Paint it black as you may, conscience says yea and amen to the indictment.

2. *Death is a tremendous fact.*—This follows sin as night the day. A liberal writer says: "We have managed in the progress of these last times to fill hell up." Would that it were so. It is still a yawning, fathomless gulf, and fixed.

> "There is a death whose pang
> Outlives this fleeting breath.
> O, what eternal horrors hang
> Around the second death!"

There is a suggestion of truth in the Greek fable of Prometheus, who was chained to the rock of the Caucasus with the vulture tearing at his vitals, and who cried out in his pain: "I must needs endure this until one of the gods perchance shall bear it for me."

Christ has borne it all. He is our substitute. God accepts Him as such, and we are free.

It is that which made martyrs brave.

Alice Driver, nearing Smithfield, cried, touching the chain: "This is a goodly neckerchief. God be praised for it!"

John Bradford said, facing the fagots: "Now shall I ascend in the fiery chariot to sup with my Lord in His kingdom to-night."

Castilia, standing on a dizzy height from which she was to be cast to her death, said to her executioners: "Cast my body down, if you will; my soul can not fall, but, like an eagle, shall ascend to God."

III. THE COMPENSATION

The farmer, scattering his seed in the field, looks for a harvest. Christ sowed the seed; out of death came life. His influence has been perpetuated, and will be till the end of all things here and into the far beyond.

The centurion, looking on the pallor of the Savior's face, said: "He is dead." The rabbis said: "He will trouble us no more." The disciples, grief-stricken, murmured: "We hoped it was he that should deliver Israel; but, alas! he is dead." At the same time all heaven was ringing with the cry: "He that was dead liveth, and is alive forever more, and hath the keys of death and hell."

"He shall see his seed." He has already seen it: John, Peter, and the Magdalen. Others were coming: Saul, Lydia, Queen Candace's chancellor, three thousand on the day of Pentecost, sometimes more, and still they are coming, millions strong.

Three mighty men sought universal empire—Cæsar, Alexander, Napoleon. Here lies Cæsar at the foot of Pompey's pillar, dead. Write on his gravestone "Failure." There lies Alexander under the table, dead, as the

result of a drunken revel. Write on his gravestone "Failure." Yonder lies Napoleon, under the dome of the Invalides, with his battle-flags around him. Write on his gravestone "Failure."

There is One above all. He sought universal empire and won it. The story is profoundly fascinating, inspiring, arousing!

When Handel was composing the Oratorio of the Messiah he was found with his face resting upon the table, his form shaken with sobs. Before him lay the score, open at the place where it is written: "He was despised, he was rejected!"

The unparalleled tragedy stirs the soul to its deepest depths, not only in sympathy for the unmerited cruelty He endured, but for the hope of eternal life He brought to the universe of mankind.



BIOGRAPHICAL SERMONS



LVIII

WASHINGTON

A good man leaveth an inheritance to his children's children.

—PROVERBS xiii: 22.

"THE child is father of the man." The boy Washington wrote in his copy-book: "Labor to preserve in your bosom that lingering spark of heavenly fire which men call conscience." It was not his sentence except as it became his by copying it over and over again when learning to write. His subsequent life showed that in it he had incorporated that principle, for he was noted above all else as a man of conscience.

His father died when he was ten years old, but he had a wise and good mother. *That told!*

He came near being a midshipman in the British navy. He saw tears in his mother's eyes when about to embark. That was enough. That little change of purpose was the turning-point not only in his history, but in the history of the nations.

To Lafayette, speaking to Washington's mother of her son's brave deeds and successful campaign, she replied, "I am not surprised; George was always a good boy."

The House of Burgesses voted him thanks for a brave and dangerous effort in the war with the French and Indians. He arose to reply, but could not speak. The

presiding officer said, "Sit down, Mr. Washington, your modesty alone can equal your valor."

He was elected to Congress in 1774 and made Commander-in-Chief of the Continental forces. Then came those eight years' startling events out of which was born our constitutional freedom. At the close of the war he gracefully resigned his sword, saying, "The chaplains of the army will render thanks to Almighty God."

On becoming the first President he said: "No people can be bound to acknowledge and adore the invisible Hand which conducts the affairs of men more than the people of the United States. Every advance . . . to an independent nation was a token of *providential agency*."

At the close of his second presidential term he observed: "Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable." "Morality is a necessary spring of popular government."

Washington finally retired to Mount Vernon, died an old man, and his last words were: "It is well."

Washington's success was less due to his qualities of mind than his *heart*. Religion was at the bottom of it.

I. HE BELIEVED IN GOD

To him God was a *person*, not a Universal Law, nor a Prevailing Force, nor a "Something that Maketh for Righteousness." Speaking of Braddock's defeat, he wrote: "By the all-powerful dispensation of Providence I have been protected beyond all human probability, for I had four bullets through my coat and two horses shot under me; yet I escaped unhurt, while death was leveling my companions on every side of me."

He held that Divine Providence protected this country

as well as himself. Listen to him as he speaks of his country: "A man must be worse than an infidel who does not see the goodness of God or has not gratitude enough to acknowledge it."

II. HE BELIEVED IN JESUS CHRIST

He held the doctrine of justification by faith through our Lord Jesus Christ. No salvation in any other way.

In his day the question was raised whether the nation was a Christian nation. He never doubted it.

What has been the verdict of the people in all the presidential elections? From George Washington to Theodore Roosevelt they have cast their votes for acknowledged Christian men, believing that the government is safest in Christian hands.

All our legislatures and our Army and Navy have Christian chaplains. Significant! Is there need of further argument?

III. HE WAS A MEMBER OF A CHRISTIAN CHURCH

An Episcopalian. His pastor, Rev. Lee Massy, said of him: "I never knew so constant an attendant on church as he, and his behavior in the house of God was ever so deeply reverent that it produced the happiest effects." But he was more than a churchman. On one occasion when encamped at Morristown he asked permission to participate in the Communion in the Presbyterian Church. The answer was: "We do not propose to celebrate a Presbyterian Supper nor an Episcopalian Supper, but the Supper of the Lord. Come and welcome, if you love Him." He was there. All the world knows that any narrower interpretation of the Holy Communion is a

shame. A hedge around the sacred table here has no existence around the Marriage Supper of the Lamb.

IV. HE BELIEVED THE BIBLE TO BE THE WORD OF GOD

He referred to it as the "pure and benignant light of revelation." He read it. He loved it. He lived by it.

In his day there was no controversy as to the inerrancy of the Scriptures. People either did or did not believe them to be the Word of God. Scholars had not learned to juggle with words. It never occurred to any one that a man could be a believer and an unbeliever at the same time.

A nephew of Washington coming suddenly into his room found the great man on his knees with an open Bible before him. Were we accustomed to read our Bible on our knees we should find fewer faults in it and love it more. The sin of our time is irreverence. "Fools rush in where angels fear to tread."

V. WASHINGTON BELIEVED IN THE SABBATH

The presidential home was a Sabbath-keeping home. The officers, rank and file of the army were required to respect the sanctity of the Sabbath.

Times have changed. But who will say for the better in this respect? The fundamental principles of truth and morality have not changed. The twentieth chapter of Exodus remains the same. If men have abrogated the eighth, ninth, tenth, and eleventh verses, God has not. What will they have to say for themselves at the judgment? No man can violate the Sabbath with impu-

nity. No nation can disregard the Sabbath law and live. The path of Sabbath-breaking is marked with ruins.

VI. WASHINGTON WAS A PRAYING MAN

When leaving home, his mother said: "My son, never neglect the duty of secret prayer." Nor did he. He rose at 4 A.M. for devotions. A Quaker, walking along a creek near Valley Forge, heard a voice in the thicket, and making his way to it, found Washington on his knees, his face uplifted, and his eyes full of tears. The Continental cause at the time was at its extremity—the troops were barefooted, hungry, and heartsick. The treasury was empty. He prevailed.

A man of prayer is a man of power. All the great leaders of men for human rights have been praying men—such as Cromwell, the Prince of Orange, and Gustavus Adolphus, who entered battle with a prayer on their lips.

VI. WASHINGTON PRACTISED WHAT HE BELIEVED

The copy head mentioned at the beginning of this digest was his guiding star. Even his name was a voucher. It is said that even the flour manufactured in Mount Vernon passed in West India ports without inspection. His light shone. So let yours.

There is a startling parallel between the United States and France almost at the same time.

God had His Washington. France had its Napoleon. Our people were praying. The French people were cursing. Our people believed in God. The French *Corps Legislatif* passed this resolution: "There is no God." The fabric of constitutional freedom was rising on this side of the sea. The sharp blade of the guillotine was decapitating the bravest and noblest of France. Our

nation rejoiced in success and gave praise to God. The ill-founded temple of freedom in France went down in fire and blood.

While we pay tribute to the name of Washington, we pay tribute to Washington's God. He lived for God, labored for God, and finally triumphed in the faith of God.

LIX

JUDAS ISCARIOT

OR

THE FLOWER, FRUIT, AND ASHES OF SIN

And Judas Iscariot which also betrayed him.
—MARK iii : 19.

JUDAS ISCARIOT is the abhorred of all men. Boys are called after the name of John, James, Matthew, Paul, and Peter, but was ever a boy called after the name of Judas Iscariot? Yet he was once an infant in a fond mother's arms. He played with other boys in the street, and was as innocent and merry as any of them. He dreamed dreams and saw visions, like others, in his young manhood. Then he entered upon a new career. Jesus met him. The issue of eternity was in the contact.

A man either becomes better or worse by meeting with Jesus. If he meets Jesus with a penitent heart and a humble, teachable spirit, he will live a transformed life. If with a spirit of self-interest and for what he can get in a mercenary way, he will go on from bad to worse. This is the evolution of death.

There is a tree in the Orient which bears a crimson blossom before it puts forth foliage, a flower so deadly that bees in search of sweetness, dipping into it, fall dead. The fruit of this tree is a gall-apple which at ripeness is filled with a bitter dust. It is appropriately

called the Judas tree, and it is an apolog of the self-propagating power of evil.

There are three stages in the development of evil:

I. LUST

This is the blossom. It is an uncanny word. James says, "And lust, when it hath conceived, bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death."

Take the three forms of it:

1. *Avarice.*—The desire for money. Judas carried the bag. Money in itself is innocent. But the "*love* of it is the root of all evil."

> "Gold! gold! gold! gold!
> Bright and yellow, hard and cold,
> Molten, graven, hammered, and rolled;
> Heavy to get and light to hold;
> Hoarded, bartered, bought and sold,
> Stolen, borrowed, squandered, doled;
> Spurned by the young and hugged by the old
> To the very verge of the churchyard mold;
> Price of many a crime untold:
> Gold! gold! gold! gold!
> Good or bad a thousandfold!
> How widely its agencies vary:
> To save, to ruin, to curse, to bless,
> As even its minted coins express,
> Now stamped with the image of good Queen Bess,
> And now of a bloody Mary."

Money, to be a blessing or a curse, depends upon how we *get* it and how we *use* it. It will warm the blue hands of poverty, or burn up truth, virtue, love, and all the noblest passions of the heart. It will make a garden out of a wilderness or scorch the greenest meadows.

2. *Sensuality.*—The inordinate desire of pleasure. The sensual man is under the dominion of his senses.

He lives to gratify himself. His end is disappointment and shame, for pleasure wanes and palls, then merges into pain.

The Greeks had a temple of pleasure which was entered by a magnificent doorway, where lights gleamed and minstrels played and sang. From within came sounds of music and dancing. But at the rear of this temple was a wicket gate opening into a swineyard. The end of pleasure, therefore, is not satisfaction but satiety. The bacchanal is thrust forth, stripped and despoiled, into shame and contempt. His substance wasted, he sits in the swine-field alone with his shame and his poverty.

3. *Ambition.*—Overweening love of earthly honor. This is the weakness of the noblest minds.

Alexander the Great dreamed that he was at the doorway of Paradise. There he besought a blessing. The warder gave him a concave disk of bone, an empty eye-socket, saying: "This hath passion infinite, but a little dust will cover it. Control thyself, O king!" He went his way and placed his disk in a scale. Vainly he sought to weigh it down with gold, more gold, and still more gold. He threw in precious stones and jewels, urns and chalices—in vain! He added his purple robes and crown, but still in vain! Then he bethought himself of the word: "A little dust will cover it." A handful of dust was thrown into the scale, and the eye-socket went up like a feather.

So the paths of glory lead but to the grave. A handful of graveyard mold will cover it.

II. SIN

"Lust bringeth forth sin." The taste of the sacramental bread and wine was still on the lips of the man of Kerioth

when he entered the Hall of Caiaphas. There he betrayed his Lord for the thirty pieces of silver.

Judas was eagerly received. The rulers had waited for this chance a long while.

"When will you deliver Him?"

"To-night."

"Where?"

"In the garden on the slope of Olivet. He is there now at prayer."

So Judas started for the place with guards, rabbis, and a mob with swords, staves, and lanterns. The traitor was in the lead. They hastened down the Kedron and up on the opposite slope of the hill, and entered through the gate. Pausing a moment, Judas said: "Whomsoever I kiss, the same is He; hold him fast." Starting off again they arrived finally at the grove. In the dim light of the moon they saw Him yonder, and Judas, rushing headlong to his ruin, drew near and threw his arms around Him, saying, "Hail, Master!" and kissed him. The word here used means a kiss such as a lover gives a maid. He kissed him eagerly again and again. That kiss marked the consummation of his sin—sin against light, a sin against a warning. Treachery! Guilt, deep and dark!

That sin of Judas stands alone. Yet all sin has in it the element of treachery against Christ.

"Alas! for me, the guilt is mine
Whene'er against Thy will benign
My treacherous heart hath stood;
Mine are the lips that have betrayed,
Mine is the debt which must be paid
With groans and tears and blood."

III. DEATH

This is the gall-apple: "Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death."

Judas "went unto his own place."

We catch three glimpses of this man's face:

1. *When he hurried from the upper chamber, "and it was night."*—In the Wiertz gallery at Brussels there is a picture of Judas wandering about on that dreadful night. He has come upon a group of workmen who, wearied by their labors, have fallen asleep. The light of the moon falls upon their quiet faces. The features of Judas are distorted with evil passion. He catches sight of the cross lying on the ground, the carpenter's tools beside them. He clutches his money-bag and hurries on.

2. *At the doorway to the hall Gazith, where the rabbis are in session.*—He may not enter. He pauses at the door a moment, his face haggard and convulsed with an unspeakable despair. With a cry, "I have betrayed innocent blood!" he throws the thirty pieces of silver down upon the marble floor. His heart and conscience are on fire. He hurries out again into the night.

3. *At the field Aceldama.*—The body of the traitor hangs from the bough of a tree over the deep abyss of Hinnom.

The owls in the cleft are hooting "Fool, fool, that he did not know it!" The weird winds moan through the branches "O fool, not to have known that 'the wages of sin is death'!"

By way of application:

1. *Warning.*—Beware of the beginnings of sin. When Pompey could not prevail upon a certain city to billet his army, he besought the people to let in a poor maimed

soldier for the night. That night the maimed soldier opened the gates and admitted the army.

An illicit desire has in it the promise and potency of a mortal sin.

2. *Hope and promise.*—If Judas, at any time before death, had sought God's mercy he would have found it. He was not beyond pardon. Jesus prayed for His murderers when on the cross. God has no pleasure in the death even of a Judas. "Why will ye die?" He says, with the emphasis on the "will."

Peter denied Christ and was filled with remorse, but, repenting, he was forgiven. The old monk, Staupitz, said to Luther, overwhelmed with shame: "The true repentance is that which drives the soul to God."

God is a great forgiver. He listens to hear the sobs. He waits for prayer. He is ready to speak the magic word "PARDON!"

LX

A COWARD, AND WHAT BECAME OF HIM (PILATE)

And Pilate gave sentence that what they asked for should be done.

—LUKE xxiii : 24 (R. V.).



T is to the credit of human nature that we all abhor a coward. Sir Walter Scott had a brother whom, it is safe to say, you never heard of. His name was Daniel. When a lad Daniel went to the West Indies. In a revolt among the negroes he showed the white feather and fled. His name was never mentioned after that in the family. They called him "our relative" when reference had to be made to him. Daniel died. He was buried secretly. No weeds were worn for him. He was a coward.

An old king of the Macedonians, Perseus by name, was left out of the chronicles. He fled during a battle. He was found by some of his captains and had his purple robe hidden in his saddle. He carried his diadem under his arm. At the sight of his pale face they turned back, one on pretense of fastening his shoe, another of watering his horse, and thus he vanished from view.

It is bad enough to be a physical coward, but worse to be a moral coward, especially when principle is at stake; to have convictions but no courage behind them; to recognize the evil, but lack pluck to say "No."

Here's Pilate. A too close contact with evil had plowed furrows across his face. Sensuality had left its mark.

He had come from Cæsarea to Jerusalem during a great feast to keep peace, for the Jews were a turbulent race. His headquarters were at the castle of Antonia; but he kept well indoors, for the Jews as well as others hated him. He had built an aqueduct not long before and paid for it out of Corban, the sacred treasury of the Temple. When the Jews remonstrated he sent a band of Roman soldiers and slaughtered many of them. A little later he set up a Roman standard in Jerusalem on which was the name of the emperor to whom divine honors were paid. The Jews arose, besieged his gates, and demanded the removal of the idolatrous symbol. More recently still, while a few Galilean peasants were worshiping, he sent some soldiers to slaughter them to gratify a grudge he had against them.

On the morning of an April day he was awakened by a beating at the castle gates. A prisoner was brought to him for trial whom the Sanhedrin accused of blasphemy: of making himself equal with God. But this was a theological question, and a Roman governor could not recognize it. So they trumped up the following charges against him: First, he had perverted the nation; second, he had forbidden payment of tribute to Cæsar; third, he had proclaimed himself king. Pilate must decide on the case; there was no escape.

So, dear friend, you must decide what you will do with Jesus.

I. MARK THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF PILATE'S COWARDICE

1. *He had heard about Jesus and knew Him.*—The sayings and works of Jesus were in the air. He had had an interview with Jesus. In this interview Pilate said:

"Art thou a king?" Jesus said yes, but not of this world—a king in the province of truth.

2. *Pilate had been warned concerning Him.*—Conscience rung the alarm. So had his wife, Procula. She had had a dream. Tradition tells us about it. She saw a fire that consumed homes and temples and palaces, licked up forests, and burned the heavens like a parched scroll, so that nothing could extinguish it. There were the cries of the homeless, the fear-stricken, and the dying. Then a lamb appeared, and as it lifted its eyes all sounds were hushed. It mounted the flaming pyre; its side was pierced, blood gushed forth, and the fires were quenched. Then the lamb assumed human form:

> "Of a man divine and passing fair,
> And like your august prisoner there."

Therefore she said, "Do no harm to that just man."

3. *Pilate attempted evasion and compromise.*—"Why, what evil hath he done?" He might as well have sung a lullaby to a cyclone. "Crucify him! crucify him! crucify him!" roared the mad mob.

Then a happy thought struck him. "I will send him to Herod." But that old schemer could not be caught napping. So Herod sent him back. Pilate must take the responsibility. Said he, "I will chastise him and let him go." Shame for a Roman magistrate! The man is either guilty or innocent. If guilty, he must die; if innocent, he should be set free.

Compromise never pays. "Nothing is settled until it is settled right." In 1787, at the making of our Constitution, the fathers were confronted with the question of slavery. They compromised, and the country reaped the whirlwind ever since. In 1820 Henry Clay came

with his Missouri Compromise: "No slavery north of 36° 30′ except in Missouri." This was the rankling thorn in the country's side for years. In 1852 Stephen A. Douglas proposed the Kansas-Nebraska bill. It was a compromise and it settled nothing. The earth was rumbling then. In 1861 the heavens reverberated with the thunder of artillery. The whole land was sodden with tears and blood.

In religion, as in politics, compromise is an ever-disturbing element. No man nor church, no pastor nor teacher, can afford to split differences in spiritual things.

II. THE OCCASION OF PILATE'S COWARDICE

1. *Pilate was a trifler.*—He lived in an age of cynicism. The foundations of religion were broken up.

> "On that hard Roman world, disgust
> And stated loathing fell;
> Deep weariness and sated lust
> Made human life a hell."

And this man grew up in it.

He had been a soldier. He cracked jokes around the camp-fire. He made sport of gods and sacred things. And now, facing the divine Truth-giver, the irony of his retort, "What is truth?" was but the outcome of this pernicious habit.

Some trifle to-day with sacred things, quoting Scripture in jest. College boys often sing nonsensical and laughable rhymes to well known sacred tunes. We can not make light of sacred things with impunity.

2. *Pilate was not his own man.*—He went for advice to the people, to his wife, and to the priests. He knew the law. He had decided opinions just what to do, but he was a *coward.*

Don't farm out your opinions. Let no priest, sanhedrin, newspaper, nor synod do your thinking for you. "Let no man take thy crown." "Quit you like men."

Have convictions. Own them. Defend them, come what may. If ever in doubt, go to the wise Counselor: "If any lack wisdom let him ask of God."

3. *Pilate was a sycophant.*—The people touched a raw spot when they said: "If thou let this man go thou art not Cæsar's friend." Tiberius, a jealous tyrant, owned Pilate body and soul. Should Pilate offend him he might drop out of the line of promotion. At all hazards, he must be Cæsar's friend.

Soon after, however, Tiberius was off the throne and Caligula was on. Caligula said: "Bring Pilate to me." He must answer to the charges about that aqueduct, that Roman standard, and that murder at the altar in Galilee. A little later Pilate was an exile and a wanderer. Tradition says that he ended his own life at Lake Lucerne. As the legend goes, once a year a specter rises from the water, wringing its hands, as Pilate did when he disclaimed responsibility for Jesus' death:

> "By God abhorred, by man despised,
> Shunned by the fiends below,
> Where shall the wretch, to hide himself,
> And hide his meanness, go?"

But bide a wee. There may be moral cowards among us. Guthrie had this family motto, "*Sto pro veritate.*" Let us stand for the truth, the truth against the world. Nothing better.

Are we not all in a sense in Pilate's place? Jesus stands before us in judgment. What think ye of Him? What will ye do with Him? Chastise Him and let Him

go? Send Him to Herod? He'll come back. The jurisdiction is ours. Will you mock Him with admiration of His manhood and reject His Divine claim? Tell Him of His heroics? Sentimentalism counts nothing with him. He is really what He claimed to be or He is an imposter. He either bore our sins on the tree or the world has been deluded by Him all these centuries.

You and I must say whether He is our Christ or not. It is cowardice to believe the truth and not stand for it. Out of this moment may flow eternal issues. Do right, *do right*, DO RIGHT, tho the heavens fall; and God bless you in doing it.

LXI

JOAN OF ARC

So Esther drew near, and touched the top of the sceptre.

—ESTHER v: 2.

IN 1429 France trembled in the balance. Nobody seemed to like Charles VII., yet doubtful support was given him.

The English army was before the city of Orleans. Had it surrendered, history would have been changed. Says Dr. Arnold, "In all probability England would have become an appendage of France." But God holds the strings.

Meanwhile Joan was watching her flocks near Domrémy, seeing visions, and hearing voices which said: "Go to Orleans and deliver it." She told the parish priest. He said, "How can a maid deliver Orleans?"

"I fear nothing; God will clear the way," she replied.

She traveled one hundred and fifty miles through the enemy's territory and, reaching Captain Beaudricourt's camp, said: "Gentle sir, I am Jeanne la Chapelle. God has sent me to relieve Orleans and confirm thee on the throne." She was subjected to severe examination, and then was provided with suitable white armor and mounted on a black horse. A banner was placed in her hand, on

one side of which was the fleur-de-lis and on the other the word "*Jesus.*"

She set forth. Many followers on the way joined her, and before reaching Orleans she was the head of a large army. One morning, awaking out of a troubled sleep, she exclaimed: "My God! the blood of my people reddens the earth. Why was I not aroused? Quick! My sword, my horse, my banner!"

The French had already been attacked and were being worsted. They rallied on her appearance and Orleans was saved. Bells rang all night and Te Deums were sung in all the churches.

Subsequently Joan was betrayed into the enemy's hands by her own countrymen, tried, sentenced to death, and burned at the stake at Rouen. Her last word was "*Jesus,*" and she finished her prayer in heaven.

All manner of fables have arisen about her death, among them that of an English soldier who, hearing her utter the word "Jesus," declared that he saw a white dove escape from her parted lips.

Twenty-five years afterward she was cleared of all fault, and ever since has been greatly revered by the nation which she saved. Other nations have shared in this reverence. When the English army, pursuing Napoleon after his defeat, passed through France with sword and torch, it refrained from harming Domrémy.

The public square in Rouen, where she suffered martyrdom, is marked by a cross in the pavement, whither pilgrims go to honor her memory. After four hundred years the Roman Catholic Church that sentenced her to death is about to place her in the calendar of saints.

The charges against her were witchcraft and unseemly forwardness.

I. AS TO THE CHARGE OF WITCHCRAFT

It rested upon the voices she heard. It is not for us to say whether God spoke to her in this way. He speaks in many ways:

1. *By an audible voice.*—Abraham heard Him, and in obedience to the summons left his kin and country.

Moses heard Him, and left the wilderness for Egypt to deliver God's captives.

Elijah heard Him, and arose from His knees and did the greatest work of his life.

God may or may not speak to men now. He never spoke to me in an audible voice. He may never have spoken to you so; but it does not follow that He may not do it to others. We can not set bounds to His powers and methods of communication.

2. *Through conscience.*—This is real. Voice is but vibrant air. The soul vibrates under God's touch, and He tells us of sin. He invites us to a spiritual life in this way; that is, if conscience is not perverted; then it is a finger-board pointing to heaven. But if perverted, it points the other way, and all sorts of devilish deeds have been done in its name.

3. *In the Scriptures.*—These are the court of last appeal. If in doubt respecting conscience it may be verified by consulting the Bible. It is the touchstone to all thought and action. A man may guess correctly the points of the compass, but to be certain he must see which way the magnetic needle points. Dr. Holmes tells of making a purchase and laying down a bank-note in payment. The Scotch woman took down her bank-note detector, and then thrust back his money, saying: "Ah, mon, it winna stan' the book." So, when all is said and done, the ultimate test is the Bible. If a thought or

action "winna stan' the Book," that ends it. Conscience may go wrong, but not the Book.

II. AS TO THE CHARGE OF UNSEEMLY FORWARDNESS

Was Joan justified in appearing in unwomanly guise when leading her army into the fray?

1. *Home is woman's sphere.*—It is safe to say that the Maid of Orleans in camp and in battle would fain have been back in the meadows of Domrémy or spinning at her mother's fireside.

Benjamin West, when a mere lad, rudely drew the picture of his baby sister. His mother bent over him and kissed him. He said: "That kiss made me." Had that mother been away from home Benjamin West would have been a different man. "How far yon little candle throws its beams!"

2. *In society.*—This is an important field for women, but how many misuse it. There are young women in social life whose eyes are as dangerous as those of a basilisk, whose locks are like those of the Medusa, and whose hands are as harpies' talons. Woe to any who are ensnared thereby! But, bless God, there are others whose speech is courtesy and whose hands are kindness. The presence of Joan of Arc stopped the swearing and vulgarity of the rough soldier.

3. *In the broader life of the world.*—Circumstances alter cases. Vashti refused to exhibit her charms, and preferred to relinquish regal honors rather than feed the vulgar passions of wine-bibbers. But when Queen Esther would save a nation from extinction, she sacrificed personal preferences and ventured into the drunken feast with her life in her hand. There are times when good

women are constrained to make their influence felt even in the boisterous walks of secular life.

4. *In the broadest field of life.*—The Church of Jesus Christ. The age has vindicated woman's right to help forward Christ's Kingdom in ways unknown to other ages. She has gone to work side by side with her brethren in the great mission field, in the hospital, in the Sunday-school, in the great boards of the Church, as Deborah went up with Barak to Esdraelon.

One of the largest active volcanoes is in Hawaii. At night it glows like a forest on fire. It is associated with the infernal gods. It was the home of the evil Pelee. No woman could set foot on the mountain under penalty of death. Missionaries dispelled the superstition. A woman, Kapiolani, defied the goddess. The people expected her to fall dead. She plucked berries from the sacred tree of Pelee and, standing on the verge of the crater, threw them in, saying, "I defy the wrath of Pelee in the name of Jesus Christ!" The spell was broken, and superstition yielded to common sense and to the claims of Christ. Woman is now in the very van of noble reforms and in the advancement of the Gospel of Jesus.

The life of Joan of Arc was one of entire consecration to her mission. In this she is an example to all who wish to consecrate themselves to a still nobler cause, the noblest and best of all—the cause of Jesus of Nazareth.

LXII

CROMWELL

> And I said, This is my infirmity: but I will remember the years of the right hand of the most High.
>
> —PSALM lxxvii: 10.

DR. GURNALL quaintly remarked of the fervor of repentance that "The hound, when he hath lost his scent, hunts backward and so recovers it, and pursues his game with louder cry than ever."

David was depressed. He saw, however, that this was a low view of Providence. He then reviewed God's mercies, and exclaimed: "This is my infirmity: but I will remember the years of the right hand of the most High."

Three hundred years have passed since the days of Oliver Cromwell.

Cromwell was born in the Fen Country at Huntington, April 25, 1599. At the time England was burdened with taxes. Ireland was priest-ridden. Scotland stood for Christ's Crown and Covenant.

The Tudors were making way for the Stuarts, an evil family. James I. came from the North Country to Westminster. Arriving at Huntington, the royal cortège witnessed a wrestling-match on the green. There is a tradition that Oliver Cromwell, then a lad of four years, was pitted against Prince Charles, of corresponding age, and threw him. It was ominous sport. There was many a

bitter contest to come in the following years before the one would throw the other—upon the headsman's block.

Popery was struggling for supremacy in England. Black Bartholomew's day still cast gloomy shadows prophetic of what might happen in London. Kegs of powder were put under the House of Parliament by Guy Fawkes, but discovered in time to prevent a fearful loss of life. There was a revival of the national Protestant spirit which had crushed the Armada in Elizabeth's reign. The King James Version of the Scriptures settled the matter. England was henceforth to be Protestant.

In 1616 Cromwell matriculated at Cambridge. Shakespeare died at this time at Stratford-on-Avon. This marked the passing of the Golden Age of literature to make way for the great controversy of civil and ecclesiastical freedom.

Going from Cambridge to London, Cromwell may have followed the crowd to Tower Hill to witness the execution of Sir Walter Raleigh. He may have seen him on the scaffold, drawing his finger along the keen edge of the ax which was to sever his head from his body, with the remark, "This is a sharp medicine, but it cures all ills." About this time the *Mayflower* sailed with a company of brave people bent upon civil and religious freedom.

Cromwell entered Parliament in 1628. His first effort was to defend his constituents against the unjust claims of the king. Then he took a leading part in the ecclesiastical controversies.

He was reelected to Parliament by only one majority. On what a slender thread hung the future history of England and of the world! Now came the contest between the so-called divine rights of the king and popular

rights. Cromwell moved that the power of the militia should rest in Parliament and no longer in the Crown. The king sought to arrest the prime movers, but he had to flee from London, to return to it only to step upon the scaffold.

In 1642 Cromwell became a captain, and found himself at the head of troops known, from their closely cropped hair, as "Roundheads." He met Prince Rupert on Marston Moor. The cry of the Roundheads was: "God with us!" That of Prince Rupert's men: "Hey for the Cavaliers!" Five thousand Royalists were slain on that day. The last meeting of these two contestants was at Naseby, where the Royalists were scattered like chaff from the threshing-floor. The Scotch discovered the king's perfidy, and gave him up to die on Tower Hill.

It were well if Cromwell's history had ended here. His deeds in Ireland and Scotland dim the luster of the otherwise untarnished metal of his character.

It was a dark day when he swept through the streets of Worcester to the fierce music of the imprecatory psalms. Prince Charles looked on from the cathedral spire, and seeing his forces defeated, fled to Normandy. It is true that he came back again with waving banners, but only after Oliver Cromwell had passed away.

Cromwell returned to London after these campaigns and was received with acclamations of welcome.

The Rump Parliament was then in session. But he turned the members out and put the keys in his pocket.

That was the end of the English commonwealth. There was no authority but Cromwell's. He, however, declined the offer of the crown, saying: "I have the thing, what care I for the name?"

Cromwell died in 1658. His last words were: "O

Lord, I am a miserable sinner, but I am in covenant with thee, and thou wilt not leave me." His work fell to pieces. Charles came from over the sea. Cromwell's body was taken from Westminster Abbey, and his skull was affixed to the archway of Westminster Hall. But such men never die.

What have been the developments of the three hundred years since then?

I. WE OBSERVE A NEW IDEAL OF CHARACTER

We should not judge Cromwell by our modern standards.

If President Roosevelt should enter Congress and dissolve it with a word, take command of an army and march through Georgia to vindicate the rights of the colored people, eject all the ministers from their pulpits who did not agree with him, and usurp all the functions of the legislative, judicial, and executive departments of the government, he would do very much as Cromwell did. Such a measure can find justification only in the exigencies of the case and the demand of the times.

There was perhaps little cause for sending over two shiploads of Covenanters to Massachusetts to be sold into slavery. Conduct like this was unworthy of the man and hardly up the requirements of these days. Were Cromwell living to-day he would not do as he did then.

II. WE OBSERVE A NEW WORLD

In Cromwell's time Holland was the greatest nation. It was the center of universal industry. There the contest for civil and ecclesiastical freedom had been fought to a finish, and liberty had won an absolute victory. It was a safe refuge for the oppressed of other nations.

Spain was Holland's rival. It was a nation of adventurous navigators.

England, a little island, the size of the State of New York, began its career as a nation of importance with Cromwell. Her industries were planted and nourished by a proscriptive tariff. Admiral Blake made the way for the nations to trade with her. She became supreme on the seas and continues that supremacy.

Holland is now a fourth-rate power. Spain is a cipher in the industry and politics of the world. England's rivals now are Russia, Germany, France, Japan, and America. The world is larger than it was.

III. WE OBSERVE THE IMPORTANCE OF THE PEOPLE

There were no people in those days. They were mere flies—earthworms. Cromwell assumed to be the defender of popular rights, but he was not chosen by the people to represent them, as John Carver was in that modest cabin of the ship that sailed from Delft Haven. The French revolution had not yet come. Burns had not sung, "A man's a man for a' that." Independence Hall afterward rang out the awakening ambition, "All men are born free and equal and with certain inalienable rights."

IV. WE OBSERVE A NEW CONCEPTION OF THE CHURCH

Three hundred years ago the Church's watchword was "Uniformity." There was no room for both Roman Catholicism and Protestantism. One of these must die the death. The pope wished all to be Catholics. Archbishop Laud wished all to be Episcopalians. Scotland wanted all to be Presbyterians. And Cromwell set himself against

Pope, Prelacy, and Presbyterians, and wanted all to be Independents.

Some would have all Christians of one denomination to-day, but that would be to go back three centuries. The best interests of Christ's kingdom are conserved by freedom of denominations to enter into a friendly comity and cooperation for the saving of the world from sin. The best unity is the unity of the spirit and not the unity of polity.

V. WE OBSERVE A NEW VIEW OF THE RELATION OF CHURCH AND STATE

Three centuries ago it was supposed that the Church could not exist without the State.

German universities have been and are now the hotbeds of infidelity. Why? Because the "War Lord," as the head of the national Church, has full power of appointment to all chairs of religious instruction. The English Establishment also has been the prolific mother of abominations. This union of Church and State is against nature.

VI. WE OBSERVE THE FIELD OF ACTION HAS CHANGED

In Cromwell's time all questions were settled by the sword.

The Reformation was a battle of a hundred years, in which the whole world was embroiled. Thank God, we are breaking away from such conflict! War is horrible at best, and war continues to-day, but over political rather than religious differences; it is, therefore, more humane. Never was a more righteous war than ours with Spain, yet how reluctantly we entered upon it, and

how honorably we waged it! When war is deemed necessary it must be conducted according to the Code of Nations. In Cromwell's time international law was in its infancy. He advanced its principles greatly by standing for a nation's right of interference, in the cause of humanity, in foreign politics. He thus interposed the egis of England between the Waldenses and their persecutors, the House of Savoy. It is now time for another step forward. We should work for the cause of compulsory arbitration of all national differences.

Christ's Kingdom can not be propagated by the sword. The Roundheads said, "Go fight." Christ says, "Go preach." His army is made up of the bravest people in the world. They are braver than the Roundheads, braver than the Covenanters, braver than the Huguenots, braver than the Beggars of Holland. They come from all quarters and are at the front. They climb mountains, not as Napoleon's troops climbed the Alps with great guns. They cross plains, not as the Roundheads crossed the moors of Scotland with crossbows and culverins. They go with the evangel, they are the vanguard of civilization. They bring in the nations as prisoners of hope. They are heralds of the coming of Christ.

How have the times changed in these three hundred years! When Cromwell lived there were a hundred millions of nominal Christians; now there are five hundred millions. Who shall lift the veil of the century just born?

Everything is going right. When the smoke of war is blown away we shall see clearer, and rejoice in the achievement of wonderful things for Him whom we worship as the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.



ETHICAL SERMONS



LXIII

THE ASCENT OF MAN

I will make a man more precious than fine gold;
even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir.
—ISAIAH xiii : 12.

THIS was spoken in respect to the fall of Babylon.

Babylon stands for world-power, wealth, and arrogance; for carnal pleasures and selfish pursuits; for fleets and armies; for the subordination of the people to princes.

The overthrow of Babylon stands for the restitution of all things, the ushering in of the Golden Age. Then man will be estimated at his true value.

The Bible is very definite as to three points:

I. MAN'S ORIGIN

"Let us make man in our image."

Set over against this the statement of Charles Darwin: "Man is descended from a hairy quadruped, arboreal in its habits."

If Darwin is right, man is the product of insensate laws acting on dead atoms; the last outgrowth of a pedigree of beastly ancestors; the sum total of environment air, food, water, nurses, physicians, associations, and culture.

Thomas Carlyle says: "I have known three generations of the Darwins, grandfather, father, and son—atheists all. It is related that among the grandfather's

effects was found a seal engraven with this legend: '*Omnia ex conchis*' (everything from a clam-shell). A good sort of man, this Darwin, and well meaning, but with very little intellect. Ah! it is a sad and terrible thing to see a whole generation of men and women, professing to be cultured, looking around in a purblind fashion and finding no God in the universe. I suppose it is the reaction from the reign of cant. And this is what we have got to. All things from frog spawn! The gospel of dirt the order of the day."

We have to choose, then, between two definitions of man—God's and man's.

A triple inheritance comes to us through the Divine definition:

1. *Mind.*—Not simply that faculty of perception and calculation by which the fox, for example, can measure the brook he leaps over, but the faculty by which we confront the great verities and problems of the endless life.

2. *Conscience.*—By this we determine between right and wrong; or, as Plato says, "discern between the worse and the better reason." It involves the question of responsibility, our relation to God.

3. *Will.*—This is independent. Man has the power of choice.

It is common in these days to speak of "the reign of law." All things in the universe are under the reign of law. The crystal, the stars, the flowers, the birds—all obey the laws of their being. Nowhere do you find disobedience till you come to man. This is the source of all his miseries, for his choice of will lies in the way of wilfulness. But we find in all this kinship with God, for He possesses the power to do or not to do as He pleases.

II. MAN'S DESTINY

The immortality of the soul is the fundamental postulate on which the whole fabric of Scripture rests. If the soul is not immortal this volume is as meaningless as the last year's almanac.

God breathed into man the breath of life. What becomes of it? Can death destroy it? A mere tyro in science will tell you that even so slender a force as a zephyr can never cease to be. The soul still lives somewhere, and is destined to live forever.

The divineness in man counts for much. The red-faced, filthy, ragged, polluted, flesh-sodden drunkard in the ditch, the flies buzzing about him, has been known to rise from this degrading state, enter into conflict with his passions, and succeed in achieving a noble victory. Not so do the swine return from their wallows or dogs from their vomit.

And what about those apocalyptic visions? On the one hand you see an open door, and through it hear the curses and sobs of despair.

On the other hand another open door, and through it enrapturing music breaks upon your ear. Supreme happiness characterizes those white-robed people who are said to have come out of great tribulation.

III. LIGHT THROWN UPON MAN'S HISTORY

The ultimate fulfilment of man's destiny is written in two chapters:

1. *The Fall.*—Some time after the creation of man a calamitous factor came into the problem of his life—to wit, SIN. He was turned out of Eden. The earth which he is compelled to till is cursed for his sake. Groans and weariness naturally follow, as do also wars

and confusions and blood and bitter wailings. Ay! something has happened. Behold the magnificent ruin!

2. *The Restoration.*—In the midst of this desolation and death the Cross rises as a great rock out of the sea to which the shipwrecked may cling for safety against the angry waves, and from which the word goes forth, "I will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir."

There can be no restoration till the debris be gotten out of the way. Clear away the ruins; then build on the foundation that is laid Christ Jesus, the rock of our salvation.

The same spirit that breathed into man the breath of life can breathe into him the breath of the new life.

Let all this be applied:

1. *Know thyself as to origin and destiny.*—As a child of God. The shield of Luther bore on one side two hammers, the token of his father's handicraft; on the obverse a winged heart with the legend, "*Astra petimus*" (We seek the stars). Bind a man down to the workshop, but never in such a manner that he may not realize the responsibility of vaster, nobler tasks. And

2. *Know thy neighbor.*—Know him as a child of God. Know him in the light of the value God places upon him and the destiny he is to fulfil. This is a value that far transcends the most precious things known to mankind; for we are redeemed not with precious gold and all that that stands for, but with the precious blood of Christ. It is a destiny involving an eternity of freedom from all the ills of earth and an enjoyment in heaven as endless as it is glorious.

LXIV

WASTE OF POWER

But truly I am full of power by the spirit of the Lord.

—MICAH iii: 8.

MICAH was not an egotist. The power he speaks of is not his, but God's. It was so with Paul when he said: "I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me."

The text suggests dynamics:

I. MATERIAL POWER

God is the source of it. "Power belongeth unto God."

1. *His power is immeasurable.*—"Canst thou bind the sweet influences of the Pleiades or loose the bands of Orion?" Not all the athletes put together, with all their mighty pulleys and engines, can move a single planet from its orbit a hair's breadth; yet God is pushing the innumerable orbs in their appointed spheres through infinite space with ease.

2. *His power is inexhaustible.*—He is constantly giving out, like the sun, yet "giving doth not impoverish Him, nor withholding, enrich Him." Science says that the sun is burning up, the incandescent mass shining through its photosphere furnishes all our heat and light, and that its surface, to the depth of fourteen miles, is consumed annually. It may be utterly consumed in time; but being a million and a half times larger than our earth, it will last for some millions of eons. Were all the suns in the

sidereal system blotted out there is back of them the omnipotent Source of all.

3. *Man derives his power from God.*—Man, therefore, is but an agent, not a sovereign. The Romans were mistaken when they said that man is himself a power. To be sure, he is lord of the natural forces, and, as is said in Genesis, he has dominion over the lower orders of life, but he stops short of creation. Not an atom can he make. The most that he can do is to transmute one kind of power into another and make indefinite applications of it. Franklin did not make a volt of electricity, nor Watt an atom of steam; they only harnessed the energy of these elements and adjusted them to useful purposes.

But it is not so much of mechanics we are called upon to speak so much as

II. MORAL POWER

Moral power is transmutable into virtue, character, and usefulness. The humblest individual is a reservoir of moral energy.

This energy can not be measured. Physical strength can be measured, the striking power of our biceps muscle, the lifting power of back and limb, but there is a vast difference between moral and material power. The unit of measurement in mechanics is horse-power. The potency of an engine can be determined to a fraction. But no dynamometer has ever been invented to measure the moral power of man.

It is a fair question to ask: *What becomes of the vast deposit of moral energy?*

1. *The major part of it is latent.*—A man is like a factory adjusted to work—wheels, belts, and pulleys all in place,

fire in the furnaces, the vast machinery in motion, but turning out no grist. Or he is like Niagara, which they say has power enough to operate all the industries of the country, but it rolls on in furious indolence. Or he is like the flurry of snow which the scientists say is possessed of immeasurable potency, yet workmen shovel it into carts to be cast away. What a waste of power there is in this dormancy! And what a reckoning at the last day there must be, for power to the last atom is responsibility!

2. *The modicum of power put forth in large part goes to waste.*—It is wasted in fret and worry; in bearing needless burdens; in dreams and visions; in vain speculations; in letting down empty buckets into empty wells and drawing nothing up; in building castles in the air.

Worse still, much energy is wasted on vice. All sin is vice, and vice is always waste. The gamblers and wine-bibbers and debauchees are not the only ones who consume themselves. All are guilty, according to the measure of our indulgence. Lust of the flesh. Lust of the eyes. The pride of life. Prodigals all!

Energy is also wasted in misdirection.

Some are in pursuit of pleasure, some of wealth, some of fame, but death unloads all. What, then, of their possessions? What a useless expenditure of energy; energy, if directed aright, might have resulted in abiding blessedness. "What do I think of Victoria?" said a champion of the ring on the day of her death. "I think she wore a crown she never won. But look at my belt. I won that by hard knocks, and it is mine." But both alike are baubles in the light of eternity. The crown and the belt are both left behind, and both queen and pugilist must appear as they are before the just God.

3. *But a small portion of energy remains for profitable use.*—The things worth doing are three:

(*a*) The building of character. This means constant care and attention in the line of self-culture.

(*b*) Doing good as opportunity offers. In 1862 the Army of the Potomac lay in camp at Fair Oaks, within six miles of the Confederate capital, and for months the soldiers spent their time in digging trenches and parading instead of making the best of their opportunity to take Richmond. Too often we have let grand opportunities pass, and the good we might have done was left undone. Citadels might have been taken for God.

(*c*) Glorifying God. The Brahmans say that God alone is real, all things else being *maya*, or illusion. And man's highest hope is to attain to *Nirvana*—that is, absorption in the ineffable One, as the perfume of the lotus flower is exhaled and dissipated in the air, or as a drop of water falls and loses itself in the sea.

It is true that God is our destiny, and that our supreme hope is to return to Him, but not to lose our identity. We shall retain that, and ever grow in knowledge, influence, and power. The improved talents entrusted to us here shall be multiplied to us hereafter, and by so much we shall glorify our God the more.

Is it not, then, appalling to reflect, considering our endowments and opportunities, that so little energy is expended in the right direction and so much goes to waste?

Let us put ourselves in a right attitude toward God, remembering that we are not makers of power, only manipulators of it, and responsible for the use we make of it. The vital contact with God is Calvary. It is only by that that we can truly glorify God.

LXV

THE SECRET OF POWER

> Tell me, I pray thee, wherein thy great strength lieth.
>
> —JUDGES xvi: 6.

THERE are no accidents in history. Time and eternity are warp and woof. Causes and events blend as colors.

The Church wanes. God wants a man, and the Monk of Wittenberg appears.

The tocsin of St. Bartholomew's appeals to Heaven, and afar in the Netherlands the silent man comes to view.

Over-populated Europe needs more room, and Columbus sets sail to find the new world.

The glory departs from Israel, and Samson is the man needed.

Observe:

I. THE SECRET OF POWER

Samson's mission was indicated at his birth: "He should begin to deliver Israel." He was a Nazarite, therefore called to special tasks. Nazarites were pledged to self-abnegation, to down every personal feeling and ambition. They were total abstainers; they observed the Levitical law; they must not kiss the lips of a dead mother, for instance, lest they be defiled; they must not mourn at her grave, lest they compromise their vow. The badge of this austere brotherhood was their long hair braided into seven locks.

Notice:

1. *Samson's physical power.*—It was a supernatural gift. His muscles were like twisted cords. In his youth he met a lion and rent its jaws with ease. Afterward, single handed, he slew a thousand Philistines. Still later he carried off the gates of Gaza to the hilltop as a feather-weight.

2. *Samson's spiritual power.*—It is written that "the spirit of the Lord strove with him." In the home his mother would way, "My son, be faithful to the task which the Lord hath ordained for thee."

He sat upon his father's knee and heard of Jephthah's expeditions among the villages from Aroer to Minnith.

Mark, he was not to deliver Israel; only to begin to do that, as John Brown, of Osawatomie, began to deliver the Southern slave; as Arnold von Winkelried, at mortal peril to himself, opened the ranks of the enemy. Samson had a mission.

The strong man always has a mission. Saul, for instance. He was an inquisitor up to the time of his conversion. After that, a preacher of power with a fiery zeal for souls.

II. THE LOSS OF POWER

It was gradual. The eclipse is not an instant veiling of brightness. So with the enfeeblement of a strong man.

Samson was bewitched with a fair face. "She pleaseth me well." Her beguilements were woven about him like the bands of Gulliver in Lilliput.

It is always perilous to trifle with sin.

The messenger boy sent post-haste trifles when he lingers to look at lads in a fascinating game. The man

with a Divine message trifles when turned aside by passing pleasures or offers of gain.

Samson laid his head in the temptress's lap. Delilah said, "Tell me wherein thy great strength lieth."

"Bind me with seven green withes," but he broke them. "Bind me with new ropes that never were used," but he snapped them like cotton thread. "Weave my seven braids with the web," but he walked off with both web and beam.

"Cut off my locks." Ah! there was the secret. He was shorn, and with the falling braids went his strength. God departed from him. "He wist not." Oh, the sorrow of it! Insidious disease gives no pain. So habit creeps and holds as with the grip of steel. The fine edge of conscience is worn off. These are the ominous signs of spiritual declension. Coquet with sin and power goes.

III. THE RECOVERY OF POWER

The strong man's eyes were put out. He sat grinding at the mill, a miserable captive. Temptation no longer enters at eye-gate. He bemoans his loss.

But bide a wee! His hair is growing. The Philistines in great numbers assemble at the festival of Dagon to offer sacrifice. He bears their mockery in silence. But he is thinking of the vow of consecration; the payment of his vow is at hand. His hour has come. He gropes for the pillars of the temple, and the huge edifice falls with a crash. Thousands perish in the débris.

Here is our lesson. The secret of a successful life is in the consecration of energy to one's mission. A tallow candle can not be thrown through the curtain of a tent, but it can be shot through an oaken plank. The reason

is the concentration of power. No arrow is wasted that speeds toward the mark.

Allan Gardiner, a young Englishman, was moved to carry the Gospel to Tierra del Fuego. He was beaten back again and again. At length, after all his companions had died, he himself lay dying in the shadow of a torn sail. He was supremely happy in his last moments, tho not a soul had been given him. But he had made a beginning, and thousands of native converts afterward told of success out of apparent failure. No such lives are wasted.

If power has been squandered, squander it no longer. Use it for Christ. Renew your strength at the throne of grace and be a power for good.



SOCIOLOGICAL SERMONS



LXVI

THE CHURCH AND THE SALOON

> For what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial?
>
> —II. CORINTHIANS vi: 14, 15.

THE temperance reform in this country is not a century old. In 1825 the use of distilled spirits was seven and one-half gallons *per capita*.

Alarming! Something must be done. "Moral suasion" was started. This developed into total abstinence and other societies, both legal and persuasive. The *per capita* of liquor now consumed is two gallons.

Just now the question touches the relation of the Church to the saloon.

Here are two forces: the one is good, the other is bad.

I. AS TO THE CHURCH

The Greek word for church is *ekklesia;* that is, "called out," an association of persons called out of the world for the service of God.

1. *It is a holy club.*—Not a holier-than-thou club. It is a club of sinners, only they are sinners saved by grace.

2. *It is not a social coterie.*—True, the best people are in it, the real *aristoi*. Not good so much as desiring to be so and trying to be so.

The social advantages are merely incidental to its prime purpose.

3. *It is not a company of truth-seekers.*—They have *found* truth. It is in the Bible. Creeds are good, but good only as they correctly represent the Bible.

4. *It is not an ethical society.*—It does not cast about for a system of morals. The Word of God contains that. Lives must be adjusted to the summary of duty found there.

5. *It is a great living organism.*—God works through it for the tearing down of the bad and the building up of the good.

The emblems of the work are the sword and trowel.

The sword is used to make war on iniquity—to cut it down, to overthrow it. Christ came into the world to destroy the works of the devil. He, as Captain, commands us to do the same thing.

The trowel is used to build up. The mason prepares the stone for his building. He lays stone upon stone. So we are to build a spiritual temple fit for the Holy Spirit to dwell in.

Thus with sword and trowel we clear the way and rear the structure of the Kingdom of God.

II. AS TO THE SALOON

A definition of a saloon must be an indictment. It is the focal expression of almost every evil.

1. *It is the enemy of man.*—It bloats his visage, reddens his eyes, seethes his flesh, and makes a cesspool and common sewer of the body. It corrupts his heart, enfeebles his will, paralyzes his conscience, and sends him reeling into the darkness from which a voice returns: "No drunkard shall inherit the Kingdom of God."

2. *It is the enemy of the home.*—It puts out the fire on the hearth, empties the barrel and the cruse, transforms the protector of the family into a fiend incarnate, clothes the wife in rags, and dooms innocent children to suffering and shame.

3. *It is the enemy of the state.*—In the last election in New York City scores of men staggered to the polling-places. Saloons were open and thronged to the very doors. Here is the Gibraltar of politics. Here the thugs and repeaters congregate. Here is the ditch of misrule. Here is the market of the purchasable vote.

The saloon is a menace to civil government. We shall have reform only when we summarily deal with it. If ever the republic should follow the ruined nations of the past, it will be on account of the saloon.

4. *It is the enemy of the Church.*—This is the impassable wall between the soul and Calvary. It engenders bitter hatred for the things that are true and lovely and of good report. The red dragon guarded the gates of the Hesperides; so the saloon stands in the way of the sanctuary and of heaven.

5. *What witnesses have we for this terrible indictment?*

(*a*) Reeling specimens on the street.

They pass by with shuffling gait on their downward road to death, hiccoughing, their faces flushed, and their language smelling of brimstone.

All sorts are in this crowd—professional men, honest toilers, frauds, gamblers, tricksters, rich and poor of all colors and grades. What wreck and ruin!

In a Kentucky town the grandson of Henry Clay lay dying of a wound received in a drunken brawl, while at the same time the grandson of John J. Crittenden was wrestling with derlirium tremens, and the grandson of

Patrick Henry was serving a term of imprisonment for attempted murder, the result of drink.

(*b*) Wives and children.

What sad-eyed, pale-faced women! God pity them. And what children! Ill-clothed, hungry, shrinking from the taunt, "Your father's a drunkard."

Millions of money are invested in liquor, millions more are spent in the havoc made by it, and still more millions spent to govern it.

(*c*) Laughter of lost womanhood.

Visit the dives. The infamy must not be spoken in decent company. Her "feet take hold on hell." Three horrors of our civilization: the gambler on one side, the saloon-keeper on the other, with socially lost woman between. What a gruesome picture for a painter!

(*d*) Prisons.

Chief-Justice Coleridge says: "More than eighty per cent. of commitments are due to the drink habit.

A while ago a man, the kindest of husbands, came home from the saloon and struck down his wife. The children stood sobbing and cowering before him. He was dragged to prison. Next morning, on awakening, he said, "Where am I?" "In prison." "What for?" "Murder." A moment of silent horror. "Does my wife know?" "It was your wife you murdered." He fell in a swoon. The constable who arrested him was the owner of the saloon that nerved him to do the bloody deed. The judge who sentenced him voted to license it. The jailer who turned the key on him was a partner in the concern.

Read the newspapers. Scan the police reports. The saloon-keeper is the criminal of all criminals, for his trade is the making of criminals.

(*e*) Insane asylums.

Said Shakespeare, that wise student of human nature: "Alas! that men should put an enemy (drink) into their mouths to steal away their brains." On competent authority it is computed that seventy per cent. of the inmates of lunatic asylums have lost their reason through their own dissipation in drink or as a result of parental indulgence in the traffic.

(*f*) The poorhouse.

Many paupers are old before their time, watery-eyed and decrepit through liquor. Most of them, however, are women and children, and are there through inebriate husbands. Many men squander their earnings in drink, and at death leave their families penniless and helpless.

(*g*) The Potter's Field.

What tragedies of pain and sorrow lie hidden under those mounds! Men, and women too, who struggled vainly in the grip of habit and ended in a frenzy. Some day an awful specter, composed of multitudes of his victims, will rise out of those graves, to the horror of the saloon-keeper and his sympathizers.

III. AS TO THE RELATION OF THE CHURCH TO THE SALOON

1. *The Church can choose to do nothing.*—Folding its hands, it sometimes says: "The saloon has come to stay." Cowardly sophism! Suppose it has. Is that a reason for entering into complicity with it? Idolatry has come to stay; so has theft, adultery, murder. Shall we revise the Decalog on that account? Christ never mourned over the prevalence of evil. He came to wage relentless war against it. He made no compromises. His teachings state that no form of evil has come to stay.

The dram-shop will continue only until God's people shall become colaborers with Christ for its overthrow.

2. *The Church may sanction the saloon.*—That is, license it. "*Licet*" (It is permitted). What is it that we permit? The dram-shop to make the strong man weak, to lay him low, to break his wife's heart, to bring suffering and disgrace to his children, to harm his neighbor, to kindle hate and strife, to nerve the robber's arm, to whet the murderer's knife, to

> "Bring disease, want, and woe,
> To make this world a hell,
> And fit a man for a hell."

3. *The Church may undertake to sanctify the saloon.*—That is, throw the cloak of ecclesiastical help and comfort over it.

In some parts of England a dram-shop can be licensed only when the parish clergyman's signature accompanies the application. It is a shame to say it, but the signature is seldom withheld. It is to the credit of America, however, that a clergyman's pulpit would be jeopardized should he do such a thing. Yet in certain ecclesiastical quarters the saloon finds favor. In view of its awful influence upon the individual, the home, society, and the nation at large, this seems almost incredible. If the roofs were lifted in this city at this moment there would be exposed as the result of the existence of the saloon such a sight of brutality, squalor, debauchery, and ruin as never before met human eyes or sickened human hearts. Still, some professed followers of the pure, sorrowing, sympathizing Christ propose to make comfortable quarters for drunken brutes, to strew sawdust on the floor of the saloon, to hang elevating pictures on its walls, and

put pure liquors on its shelves. In God's name, if the Church has aught of treasure or of sympathy to spare, let it be lavished upon the drunkard's victims and let the brute shift for himself.

Are we, then, to do nothing for the drunkard? Yes. But not to encourage him in his bestial vice. Help him in three ways: First, by legislating against his temptation. Second, by persuasion. Third, by showing him an example of total abstinence. "I haven't a heart," said a minister recently, "to deny the poor man his beer, while I lunch with my bishop at his club." Then one of two things must be done, either provide quarters where the poor man may drink, or stop lunching with the bishop at his club. "If wine make my brother to offend I will drink no wine so long as the world standeth," Paul would say, as he said of meat.

4. *The Church may antagonize the saloon.*—War to the knife and the knife to the hilt. No quarter.

In the Crimean War Russian troops were getting the worst of it in a hand-to-hand struggle with some Scotch Highlanders. All the English the Russians could say was "*Quarter.*" A brawny Scotchman replied in his broadest brogue, "We have na time to quarrter ye; we'll jist cut ye a-twa." No quarter for the saloon.

There are thirty continuous miles of saloons in the city of New York. Every red light that streams from them marks the open mouth of hell.

Ministers, denounce it! Churches, antagonize it! Suffering families look to you to do that. Crying children look to you to do it. When the niece of Richelieu was assailed by a royal debauchee, the old cardinal, with holy indignation flaming from his eyes, stood for her protection.

Shall this be the attitude of the Church?

If possible, rescue the drunkard and the drunkard-maker; but to that institution of unmitigated evil, the saloon, we can offer naught but bitterest enmity. No quarter to that. The thing must die, because it is cursed of God.

LXVII

THE SUNDAY NEWSPAPER

Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines.

—Song of Solomon ii: 15.

THE sin of our time is Sabbath desecration. The head and front of it is the Sunday newspaper.

Burglars sometimes take boys with them to open doors and climb over transoms. The Sunday newspaper is the door-opener to Sabbath desecration.

Observe:

I. THE SUNDAY NEWSPAPER IS UNNECESSARY

Its wide prevalence began in the time of our Civil War. Before that time only the *New York Herald* and the *Alta California* printed Sunday editions.

There might be some excuse for the Sunday paper during the war, for all were anxious to hear about their husbands and brothers at the front. Thus the wedge entered by considerations of both mercy and necessity. Now it can have no claim for either. Money is at the bottom of it.

II. THE SUNDAY NEWSPAPER IS UNLAWFUL

In many of our commonwealths it is under a legal ban. The laws in New York have been adjusted to allow it. The Supreme Court, however, has repeatedly decided that the moral law is an organic part of our national con-

stitution. This form of Sabbath desecration, therefore, is a violation of the fundamental principles of the republic.

III. THE SUNDAY NEWSPAPER IS DISREPUTABLE

It claims to be a great educator. Our public schools are educational. But that does not constitute a reason for opening them on the Sabbath day. Educational, forsooth! Here are the contents of a recent Sunday issue of the *New York Tribune, Times, Herald, Sun, Press, World, Journal, and News:*

	Columns	
Murders and assaults	12	
Adulteries	7	
Thefts, etc.	24	
Total of crime		**43**
Sporting	81	
Theatrical	44	
Gossip and fashion	77	
Sensational	42	
Fiction	99	
Unclean personals	8	
Total of gossip (mostly disreputable)		**351**
Foreign news	47	
Political news	113	
Other miscellaneous news	92	
Editorial	39	
Specials	199	
Art and literature	24	
Religious	3¼	
Total news and politics (chiefly)		**517¼**
Grand total		**911¼**

Religion in a Sunday newspaper is like Gratiano's "two grains of wheat hid in two bushels of chaff: you shall seek all day ere you find them, and when you have them they are not worth the search."

The headlines are such as these:

Gossip of Court—An Alleged Dramatic Shark—Embezzlement —A Sudden Death—The Buzzard Gang—A Tennessee Man in the Toils—A Woman Burned to Death—Vagrants—Smuggled Goods—A Bogus Divorce Suit—An Eloping Husband—A Mock Marriage Scandal—A Chained and Beaten Wife—Bride Arrested —Defalcation—Forgery—A Stockholder Disappears—Small-pox in Brooklyn—Convicted of Assaulting Miss Emerson—Mine Explosion—Murder—Cattle Plague—Strangled His Wife—Shot His Brother—Robbed—Killed—Cuban Bandits—Deadly Canned Fruit —Trapeze Performer's Fall—Abhorrent Scenes in a Tropical Cemetery—Failures—Deadly Oleomargarine—Gone Down at Sea —Pacific Express Robbery—Three Wives Living—Suicide—Violently Insane—Murder Trial—Dynamiters—Rowdies—He Pulled a Revolver and Threatened to Shoot Her if She Did Not Marry Him—Desperate Murderer Arrested—Witness Saw Clara and Traphagen in a Compromising Position—Gossip for Ladies at the Sunday Breakfast-Table—Snubbed—Disgrace—An Illegitimate Child—A Glove Fight—Elegant Baltimore Girl for a Mistress—Defaulting Teller—Good Gracious !—Too Thin—Blew Out His Brains with a Pistol—The Waistless Dress—The Bite of an Epileptic—Brooklyn Tax Dodgers.

Is not the Sunday newspaper disreputable? Is it not the common sewer of all our social life, the cesspool of all our shames and scandals and unmentionable things?

IV. IT ROBS EMPLOYEES OF NEEDED REST

One hundred and fifty thousand compositors, pressmen, and others are kept at work seven days in the week and three hundred and sixty-five days in the year.

Hundreds and thousands of newsboys call their wares

on the streets on Sunday. Multitudes of others are at their stands or in their stores selling the papers. Are not these getting their business education for the future? Invade the morals of youth and their after life will be one of crime as a rule.

V. IT INVADES THE SABBATH REST OF THE BUSINESS MAN

Our national malady is nervous debility. A man's brain in a whirl seven days in the week will kill him. The Sunday newspaper helps to do that.

VI. IT BREAKS UP HOME LIFE

Family worship, reading of good books, and the religious press on Sunday used to prevail. Now the head of the family reads the Sunday paper, and the children wait for him to get through, that they may do the same. The fable of the Arab and camel has come true.

VII. IT UNFITS FOR THE SANCTUARY

Can a man come to church, having spent his morning with the newspaper, and not have his mind full of his "blanket sheet?"

Is one day in seven too much for sacred rest and meditation, and to set one right with Heaven?

If there is a God who hates sin, if there is a hereafter, and this life is a preparation for it, what shall we say for ourselves when confronted at the day of judgment, not only for neglect of the sacred duties of the Sabbath day, but for a positive violation of its injunctions in the clear light of God's "THOU SHALT NOT"?

VIII. THE SUNDAY NEWSPAPER ENFEEBLES CONSCIENCE

Men used to shut their shops on Saturday nights, stop business, and go home. How is it after thirty years of Sunday newspaper reading? They may still close their shops, but they put an "ad" in the Sunday newspaper and thus "boom" their business all through the holy day. Half a million voices tell of their bargains to-morrow. Conscience is debauched in this way.

We think we are getting liberal. The fact is we are getting loose. We are afraid of being called Puritan. Better be called Puritan than profligate.

But it is argued that the Sunday newspaper has come to stay. So has sin, yellow fever, cholera, and what not; but that is no reason why they should be fostered. These are bound in time to be wiped out, and with them will go the Sunday newspaper.

We can not live without Sabbath rest. Nor can we please God without keeping the Sabbath day holy. Nor can we keep the Sabbath day holy and fill head and heart with the abominations of the Sunday newspaper.





ANNIVERSARY SERMONS



LXVIII

"COME IN, THOU BLESSED OF THE LORD"

A New-year's Meditation

Come in, thou blessed of the Lord.
—GENESIS xxiv: 31.

At the doorway of Bethuel's house in Mesopotamia stands a wayfarer, weary and dust-stained. He is the servant of an Oriental prince. He asks entertainment for himself and his train. His camels are kneeling under their burden at a distance. The daughter of the house calls her brother Laban. He is in doubt till he sees extraordinary gifts of wealth. This representative must have a master of note. "Come in, thou blessed of the Lord; wherefore standest thou without?"

It was an eventful day for Bethuel's house. It connected it with the princely lineage of Abraham.

So the New Year stands at our threshhold. Waiting for us are Heaven's gifts of richest treasures, hopes, aspirations, golden purposes, rings and bracelets for the adornment of personal character. New Year, welcome thou herald of the great King! "Come in."

The air is resonant with good wishes. "A happy New Year!" is the children's greeting. Lips tremulous with age utter it. Sick-rooms are cheered by it. The world is brighter for it.

What does this word "happiness" mean? Varro made

two hundred definitions of it. The three great leading schools of Athens tried to define it. Plato said: "Happiness is to live reflectively." Epicurus said: "Happiness is to live cheerily—'eat, drink, and be merry, for to-morrow we die.'" Reno said: "Happiness is to live with fortitude, to accept with a brave heart, for whatever is to be will be."

In each of these there is a modicum of truth. Plato was right. Live thoughtfully. Face the great problems. If God exists, believe it. If death ends all, be sure of that. If the Bible is true, be confident of it. If Jesus Christ is the Savior, accept Him.

Epicurus was right. Live cheerily. We live in a pleasant world and God is good to us. Rejoice. But in the midst of pleasure be mindful to make merry as becometh a child of God.

Zeno was right. Live with fortitude. Be superior to environment—not indifferent, but superior to it. Why not? For all things work together for good to the Christian. Heat the furnace seven times hotter than before; he can endure it, for the Son of Man is in the midst.

In the keystone of an ancient Saxon castle was a legend which contains the secret of happiness. Here's the device: A hand reached upward as in supplication, and over it the words "WILL, GOD, I CAN."

I. WILL

The beginning of all is *choice*. Without that a man is the mere creature of circumstances.

One windy day a kite flying aloft struggled to be free from the invisible cord that held it. A fleck of cloud floated by and said, "Come with me; this is a merry life." "I can not," said the kite, struggling to be free,

"I am held." A ball of thistle-down passed by. "Come with me; this is delight." "I can not, I am held." A whisp of paper whirled by. "Come with me; what a joyous life is this!" "I am held." Currents and counter-currents, capricious winds and what not subject us to perpetual danger. The Christian is held. Held by a *ruling purpose.*

Horace Bushnell was fond of saying, "Grasp the handle of your being." Grasp it as a man does the tiller in time of storm. Hold it with a calm, strong hand. Success lies that way. Steady!

II. GOD

It is necessary to choose. But choose the *highest* and *best.*

Alas! for the man who leaves God out of his reckoning.

1. *A man may live for self.*—For self-culture, for building up of character. A neighboring minister said to a man the other day that, as he professed to be a Christian, he should have some anchorage somewhere. "Oh," he replied, "I go about to all the churches and hear all the ministers." He got all he could and gave nothing; therefore, no one was the better for his getting. He hoarded all. He lived for self.

2. *A man may live for others.*—Sydney Smith said: "Life is in two heaps: the one of joy, the other of sorrow. If I can on any day take a little from the heap of sorrow and add to it the heap of joy, I reckon that day well spent." It is a good thing to make life about us sweeter and brighter. Serve the common weal and men will bless you. But is that the highest and best we can do?

3. *A man may live for God.*—The ultimate of everything is God. The chief end of man is to glorify God. There is some good in living for self, but not much. There is more in living for others, but that has its limitations and is unsatisfactory. A man never reaches his highest level till he lives for God. Living for God includes both self and others.

It was said of the ancients that to every one was given the choice of an urn.

One was a golden urn full of blood, and in it was written the one word "*Empire.*" Another was of amber and full of ashes; in it was written the word "*Glory.*" A third was of clay and empty, but in the bottom of it was written "*God.*" This was the best of all, for they were wont to say: "That one letter of that name outweighs the world."

True happiness is impossible without God. Self is a broken reed. A man may as well seek comfort in time of trouble in his shadow as in himself. David tried it, and failed again and again. He had to say at last, "Hope thou in God."

III. I CAN

This means resolution. Resolution is more than *choice*. Choice is a volitional act; resolution is a *persistent force*. In the equipment of a soldier resolution is represented by sandals. Have your "feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace." The whole armor of God was not complete without sandals. Battles used to be fought not with heavy artillery from hilltops at a distance, nor by sharpshooters from rifle-pits, but with short swords, face to face and hand to hand. Much depended upon a man's footing. Spiked sandals were of the utmost importance.

So, put on the sandals of resolution, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

Resolution is more than resolutions. Resolutions are fragmentary volitions. A multitude at this season want to turn over a new leaf. It is pretty sure to be like the old one, blotted and stained with short-comings. But resolution is one persistent energy that covers the whole year. There is no discharge in this war.

A while ago we were watching for a comet. Tho the stars were shining all the time no one heeded them. Even while we were watching the comet was gone. Cometary resolutions last but for the moment. The stars shine on forever. Resolution dependent on God's strength wins. That was a wise saying of Dr. Johnson: "I have been resolving these fifty-five years; now I take hold on God."

There must have been a charm in the face and words of Jesus that drew men to Him. He drew Matthew from his books, fishermen from their nets, and others from their various occupations to follow Him.

To some He has been speaking year after year. How long? Does He speak again this year also? Hear the call, "Arise and follow me." Do you say, "I can not." Rather be honest and say, "I will not." You *can* obey if you *will*.

Your destiny may be in this hour. "Now" is a little word, but it is mighty beyond comprehension. The field of Waterloo was a little spot, only twenty acres, but it settled the destiny of nations.

The old year is behind us. One blessing is that our sins may be cast into oblivion. Forget them. The Japanese have a proverb:

"My sleeve with tears is always wet,
I have forgotten to forget."

But here is the word for us: "Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

The new year is before us.

We stand as the servant of Abraham at the threshhold of Bethuel; or as Abraham himself, on the banks of the Euphrates, looking off toward the unknown country. A New York clergyman when a lad stood on the crest of a Scotch hill, overlooking the scene of his years of study. He lingered as he looked. Then with feelings difficult to describe he turned to face the world before him. He said: "Thirty years have come and gone since then; I have not seen the place since, and never expect to see it again." So we stand on this eminence of the New Year. We look back with mingled feelings of joy and sorrow—regrets and disappointments too, undoubtedly; but it is our duty to look forward with hope and aspiration, having every nerve vibrating with eagerness to win the race. "Let us lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith."

LXIX

THE FIRST EASTER SERMON

> And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?
> —LUKE xxiv: 32.

Two discouraged Christians were passing through a picturesque part of Palestine, but they had no eyes for their surroundings. Their hearts were broken. Their friend had been branded as a criminal, and had suffered the full penalty of the law.

A lone traveler overtook them and said: "What manner of communications are these that ye have one with another?"

They halted, and, looking sad, replied: "Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days?"

He said: "What things?"

They answered: "Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word."

They then rehearsed all that had taken place. The stranger said: "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?"

This was the first Easter sermon, and is worthy of attention for the following reasons:

I. IT WAS ADDRESSED TO THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH

It is a mistake to suppose that a building, however

magnificent or made sacred by dedicatory services, is the Church.

The Romanists say: "Where the Church is, there is Christ." The reverse is the truth: "Where Christ is, there is the Church."

Had you seen these dusty travelers in homespun you would scarcely have turned a second look upon them. Yet that group was the Church in its beginning, in which God has been working for the deliverance of our race, the mighty Archimedean leverage by which He is lifting the sin-stricken world into light and glory. The words Jesus spoke to these wayfarers are intended for His followers everywhere and at all times, and who constitute His universal Church.

II. CHRIST SPOKE OF HIMSELF

Christianity is the religion of a Person. He is more than its central fact.

All attempts to found a living system on Christian doctrine or on Christian ethics apart from Christ have been failures—*e.g.*, Neoplatonism, Arianism, Unitarianism, the Hindu Somajes, Ethical Culture, and Altruistic Socialism. You can not omit Christ and save His teaching.

His resurrection was a necessity. A dead Christ can not save. He must be a living Christ; not living apart, but living in the soul as a spiritual force counteracting inured sin and developing holiness.

When Oliver Cromwell died one stormy night in September, 1658, there was consternation among his friends. His body was scarcely laid away in Westminster when Charles Stuart and his Cavaliers appeared to assert his *jus Divinum*, and the commonwealth—because it was so closely identified with the great Commoner—was dissi-

pated like an ice palace in the sun. But suppose Cromwell had appeared as the royal cortage passed by, rallying his Roundheads about him, those Cavaliers would have fled like autumn leaves before the wind. So with the resurrection of Jesus. He came alive from the dead, and He lives evermore the living force in men, before which evil flees away.

III. THE SCRIPTURE WAS THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS EASTER SERMON

He quoted from Moses and the prophets concerning Himself.

He probably quoted passages prophesying about His birth, life, character, ministry, vicarious death, triumphant resurrection, glorious ascension, and His promised return.

IV. THE PURPOSE OF THIS DISCOURSE

He was proving a "needs be."

1. *What had happened was decreed.*—God had resolved to save the world from sin.

2. *What was decreed in this matter must be fulfilled.*—It was all mentioned in the Scripture by way of prophecy.

3. *The burden of inevitable duty was laid upon the heart and conscience of Jesus as the Ideal Man.*—Such a personage was universally expected as set forth in both profane and sacred history.

4. *Love commanded and He must obey.*—"God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

The plan was divinely mapped out and Christ could not have done otherwise. And so He said, "Except a

corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." "As Moses lifteth up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

V. THE EFFECT OF THIS DISCOURSE

The two travelers on the highway from Jerusalem to Emmaus, a distance of about seven miles, set out with hearts as heavy as if going through a graveyard; but as this stranger conversed with them hope revived, and they seemed as if they were walking through the King's garden amid the music of murmuring waters and the singing of birds. The journey ended ere they knew it. Their eyes were opened. Perhaps they saw the print of the nails. While gazing upon Him He vanished out of sight. They said one to another: "Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?"

We need Christ in us. He reveals the wonders of spiritual things. In His absence we are dull of apprehension.

Do not walk alone. Take Jesus as your companion on the way. Let Him talk to you. He will chase away dull care, lift the burden of life, give courage and hope, and make the future loom up in magnificence and splendor.

LXX

TAXING UNDER CYRENIUS

A Christmas Meditation

> **And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem (because he was of the house and lineage of David), to be taxed with Mary, his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.**
>
> —LUKE ii: 1–7.

THE December winds were sweeping over the hills when Joseph and Mary set out upon their journey. The distance was eighty miles. The roads, at times difficult, were now almost impassable. Here was a sturdy peasant, staff in hand, leading by the bridle a panniered mule whereon sits a muffled woman.

There were wonderful scenes on the way. At the ford of Kishon they would recall the song of Deborah: "The stars in their courses fought against Sisera. The river of Kishon swept them away; that ancient river, the river Kishon."

Passing under the shadow of Gilboa, where the shields of the mighty were wildly cast away, and where David uttered his lament, they would remember the words: "They were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their death they were not divided."

Farther on they came to the heights of Jezreel, where, if it were evening, they saw the glimmer of the lamps of Gideon's three hundred, and listened to the song that was at once a battle paen and a prophecy: "Then shall be broken the staff of the oppressor as in the days of Midian. . . . For unto us a child is born, his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace!"

It was probably the fourth day when they came in sight of Bethlehem. They would pass the fields where Ruth had gleaned and the pastures where David had watched his flocks. The well at the gate of the city would remind them of the exiled king when he cried out: "Oh, for a drink of the water of the well beside the gate of Bethlehem!" In the city were people on the same errand as themselves who filled all the lodging-places, and they could find for shelter only the stable attached to an inn. There was room for them nowhere else. Here in this lowly place the "King of Kings and Lord of Lords" was born.

The taxing, preferably *enrolling*, under Cyrenius, marked the fulness of time. The enrollment under Roman authority betokened the departure of all national power from Israel. The scepter fell, then Shiloh came.

All prophecy concerning the Christ was fulfilled. Christian history now begins.

Three significant facts mark the timeliness of the birth of Christ:

I. THE WORLD HAD REACHED THE CLIMAX OF SIN

It is curious that the world's sin came to its full development in what was known as the Golden Age. This marks the utter insufficiency of culture.

Luxury and licentiousness in the time of Augustus Cæsar in the court of Rome and among the people prevailed to an alarming degree. Virgil was writing his Eclogues, Horace was singing his Odes, Livy was writing his Annals. What feasts there were! What sports in the amphitheater! Cæsar gave an exhibition of six hundred gladiators, who fought hand to hand to the very death. Pompey, not to be outdone by Cæsar, brought five hundred lions into the arena. Women counted their divorces by the number of rings on their fingers. Fashionable dames asked for decrees of defamation, that they might mount the stage and exhibit themselves in lascivious dances in honor of their gods. If one would gain a just conception of the corruptness of the times, read the first chapter of Paul's epistle to the Romans. Literature contains no indictment so scathing.

Greece was little better. Zeuxis and Apelles had frescoed the walls of public buildings and private houses with consummate skill. Phidias and Praxiteles had carved statues of marvelous beauty. They challenge the emulation of art to-day. Philosophy had done its best. The very summit of earthly culture had been reached.

But over against all this may be witnessed in the frescos and inscriptions taken from the ruins of Pompeii, exhibitions of sin and shame not to be mentioned in these days. Greece, Rome, and the whole world groaned and travailed for the coming of the great Deliverer.

II. THE WORLD REACHED ITS CLIMAX OF NEED

The Messiah, it was predicted, would "be the desire of all nations."

If so, then all other plans of deliverance had failed. All other religions were dead. There was no help for human souls.

The Jewish religion had been reduced to mere form and ceremony. The Temple had become a whited sepulcher. Religious teachers, tho profuse with pretenses, stood in the doorway of heaven, neither entering in themselves nor permitting others who would enter in.

The gods of Rome were impotent. Their altars were forsaken. The people had lost confidence in them. The priests smiled at each other at the thought of their impositions.

The philosophers of Greece were helpless to redeem men. The Academy and the Painted Porch flourished on the banks of the Illyssus. Platonism dreamed of spiritual things. Stoicism hardened men to suffer silently. Epicureanism advocated present good. Gibbon says: "All the prevailing systems were by the wise regarded as equally false, by statesmen as equally necessary, and by the people as equally true." But they were not satisfied. They wanted something new.

Notwithstanding, God was not unmindful of their need. Nay, this was the hour of the centuries. The Christ had come.

III. THE WORLD HAD COMPLETED ITS CONTRIBUTION TO THIS EVENT

The *titulum* hung round the neck of Christ when He bore the cross was written in three languages—Hebrew,

Greek, and Latin—the three languages spoken by the three great nations of the earth.

The Jews were the chosen of God to perpetuate the worship of the one true God and to send down to the generations following the Messianic prophecies. Their work was finished. It was appropriate that their sovereignty as a distinct people should pass from them.

The Greeks contributed their part in giving a language, through long years of culture, which was of all other languages of the time the best adapted to the utterance of spiritual things.

The Romans contributed their part also. Cyrenius called a universal enrollment. All nations passed under the Roman yoke. The Cæsar's had built great roads for their conquering armies to the remotest colonies, even as far west as Great Britain. But these roads in the Providence of God became the highways by which Christian men and women should pass with the Gospel which would become mightier than all armies combined to bring men under the sway of the new-born King.

Thus all things were ready. When the clock of heaven struck it was Cæsar Augustus that gave the signal here below. Then the last of the prophets uttered a voice: "Prepare ye the way of the coming of God." "Behold the Lamb of God."

All prophecy is closed. The Son of God is here. The joy of the Advent season is ours. What an unspeakable gift is this! He came to the world in the fulness of time.

Let our hearts be open to admit Christ forever; that living with Him and dying with Him, we may also be glorified together with Him.





TOPICAL INDEX



TOPICAL INDEX

PAGE

ACTION.
Good Samaritan 85
Fall of Jericho 56
Is a test of belief:
Pope's couplet 230
ADVENT, CHRIST'S SECOND.
Certainty of:
Promise at Pentecost 279
Deluge 280
Visibility of:
Testimony of the Apocalypse 280
Washington's return from war 281
Will be in person:
Relation of material body to spiritual 282
Will be glorious:
Annunciation, Transfiguration, Coronation 282
Will be beneficent:
Year 1000 A.D. 283
Connecticut Legislature and the Dark Day 284
AGE, OLD.
Holmes' "The Last Leaf" . . . 195
Exploits of Cæsar, Herschel, Milton, Bismarck, Gladstone . 195
AGNOSTICISM. (See also INFIDELITY.)
Eyeless fish 152
Etymology 227
Pyrrho and Comte 228
Matthew Arnold, Spencer, and Maudsley 228
ALTRUISM.
Good Samaritan 82
Failure of, without Christ . . . 65
Philanthropy of Christian institutions 90
Sentimental sociology to be avoided 90, 201
Lepers of Samaria 127, 130
Rescuer rescued 128
Christ at Sychar, Bethesda, Gadara, Calvary 128
Dying sailor 129
Russian serf 130
Doré's "The Deluge" 201
Christian 202
Sydney Smith on 355
AMBITION.
Cæsar, Alexander, Napoleon . . 287
Alexander the Great, Dream of 299

PAGE

ANGELS, MINISTRY OF.
Elisha's young man 72, 75
ANIMALS (See MAN AND ANIMALS and MERCY TO ANIMALS.)
APAVARGA. (See SELF, SURRENDER OF.)
APOSTACY.
Among Christ's followers . . . 272
ASPIRATION.
Luther's motto 326
ASSURANCE.
St. Paul the apostle of 258
ATONEMENT.
Story of Jean Valjean 60
Jewish Day of 276, 277
Prometheus 286
AUTHORITY, NEED OF.
Guizot's remark 90
AVARICE.
Judas Iscariot 298, 300
Hood on 298
AVOWAL, BENEFIT OF.
Basle and Luther 45, 46

BEAUTY OF THE WORLD.
Antechamber of palace 194
BELIEF. (See CREED and FAITH.)
BIBLE.
Our title-deed to heaven 258
Symbol of orthodoxy:
Water-pipes and water 262
Quoted by Christ 263
Permanence:
Isaiah on 265
Citadel of Christianity:
Trojan horse 265
Literary value:
Webster, Bacon, Froude, and Scott on 266, 267
Scientific value:
Dana on 267
Historicity:
Archæological proofs 268
A drama 269
Ethics:
Decalog and Sermon on the Mount 269
Pope on ethics 269
Impregnability:
Eddystone Light 270
Chesterfield's remark 270
BIGOTRY.
In time of Cromwell 318

BUSINESS. PAGE
The Christian's:
Carey's remark 158
Qualifications for:
Promptness, enthusiasm . . . 159
Made a bar to salvation:
Busy father 174
Æsop's simpleton 174

CALL, God's. (See also CONVERSION.)
To Abraham, Moses, and Elijah 44, 311
Through Barak 47
To Joan of Arc 311
Through the Bible and conscience 311
CASUISTRY, PHILOSOPHERS LED ASTRAY BY.
Hamilton, Kant, Spencer, Mill . 137
CHARACTER.
Heart as index of:
Spartan judge 10
Building of:
St. Paul on 101
Inquiry of a college student concerning 101
Remark of Emperor Augustus on 102
The house on the sand 102
Conflagration of Mummius . . 104
Components of 104, 105
Decay of:
Saul 149
Falling away from Christ . . . 152
CHARITY.
Lincoln's Speech at Gettysburg 134
Lord's Prayer 135
CHRIST.
As Mediator:
Jacob's Ladder 12
The center of society:
The middle bolt 90
Our Prophet, Priest, and King 103, 205
Our model:
Titian as a copyist 191
Agesilaus on mimicry 191
Artist's masterpiece 246
Messiahship of:
Sign of Jonas 205
Shibboleth of:
The rescued Crusader 216
Kingdom of:
Differs from worldly ideal . . 216
Compared with Socrates by Rousseau 270
The Hall of Fame 270
Napoleon on 270
Claim of divinity 272
Rejection of:
Ancient and modern 274

CHRIST.—*Continued* PAGE
Crucifixion of:
"The Golden Passional" . . 283
The Dead Christ 287
Story of Handel 288
Birth of:
Taxing under Cyrenius . 363, 364
Journey of Joseph and Mary . 363
Vices of the world at time of 365
Failure of philosophies . . . 366
Preparation of world for . . . 366
CHRISTIAN.
What it is to be a 103
CHRISTIANITY.
Progress of 274
The religion of a Person:
Failure of ethics without Christ 360
CHRISTMAS. (See CHRIST, BIRTH OF.)
CHURCH.
Men outside of the:
Hobab of Akaba 42
Miles Standish 42
A Divine institution 43
Propaganda the purpose of . . 43
Benefit of fellowship in 45
The King's army 48
Character of the 68, 237
A reformatory agency:
Anecdote of Dr. Guthrie . . . 68
Burns' rebuke 68
The prisoner of Chillon . . . 70
Relations of, to State:
Jesus and the penny 90
Civic reform 90
Emblems of 338
CIVIC REFORM.
Through individual effort . . . 34
Church and State 90
COMPROMISE.
Lincoln's sayings 126
Evil of political 305
CONCENTRATION. (See PURPOSE, FIXITY OF.)
CONFIDENCE.
Child walking on the plank . . 257
CONFLICT.
The present an age of:
John of Bohemia at Crecy . . 91
CONSCIENCE.
Definition of 136
Plato on 137
Universality of:
The north star 137
A disordered:
Paul on 136
Deflection of the compass . . 138
Nero's cruelty 138
The restored:
The repaired watch 140
The regulated:
The ship's chronometer . . . 140
The rectified:
Dr. McCosh's illustration . . 140

PAGE

CONSEQUENCES, KARMA, THE DOCTRINE OF.
Differs from grace 214
CONSISTENCY.
Remark of Diogenes 104
CONVERSION. (See also CALL, GOD'S.)
Saul, Luther, John Newton . . 12
Lord Lyttleton, Gilbert West . 13
CONVICTION.
St. Paul on power of 233
COWARDICE.
Pilate 305, 305, 306
Walter Scott's brother 303
Perseus of Macedonia 303
Political compromises 305
CREATION WITHOUT GOD:
Autogenesis 267
CREED. (See also FAITH.)
A component of character:
Archimedes' lever 104
Pallisy, Peter the Hermit, A. T. Stewart, Columbus, Carey . 104
Without belief:
The rescued ship-captain . . 105
CREDULITY THE FIRST STEP TOWARD WISDOM:
Story of the Welsh collier . . . 229
CROMWELL.
History of 314
His last words 316
His arbitrary and cruel acts . . 317
Protects the Waldenses 320
Death of 360

DANGER.
Inscription in Tower of London 28
DARWIN. (See EVOLUTION.)
DEATH.
Simeon, St. John 195
Certainty and timeliness of . . 196
Cardinal Beaufort's defiance of . 205
Queen Elizabeth's exclamation 206
Raleigh on 315
DELAY.
Of Providence:
Jesus comes at eleventh hour. 27
Noah and Jonah 84
Not due to God's ignorance, indifference, nor impotence, 84, 85
Due to God's patience and mercy 86
In repentance:
Manton on 176
The grieved Spirit 177
Unmanliness of 177
Death and the builder 226
DELIBERATION IN RELIGION.
John Wesley on 160
DELIVERANCE. (See SALVATION.)
DELIVERERS, GREAT.
Luther, William of Orange, Columbus, Samson 331

PAGE

DELIVERERS, GREAT.—*Continued.*
John Brown, Arnold von Winkelried 332
DESIGN, ARGUMENT FROM.
Æolian harp 39
DIFFICULTY. (See ENVIRONMENT.)
DISOBEDIENCE.
Saul 151
Grieving the Spirit 151
DESPAIR.
Of the Christian 108
DOUBT.
St. Thomas 15
DUTY.
Ease in doing our:
Lazarus 51
Child drawing water 51
Adherence to:
Lighthouse keeper 126
Gunner at Waterloo 183
Fleeing from:
Jonah 186
No duties are small 239
Christians are held by:
Kite 355
Bushnell's advice 355

EASTER SERMON, THE FIRST.
Walk to Emmaus 359
ELECTION.
A secret of God:
Covered hand of Stoic 255
A fact:
Witness of the Spirit 255
Witness of the Word 257
Witness of faith 258
ENCOURAGEMENT.
Madeira guide 165
ENERGY. (See also FORCE.)
Growth of the world in moral:
Battle of Gettysburg 97
Misdirected:
Pugilist and queen 339
ENVIRONMENT, NARROW.
Jesus, John, Madame Guyon, Bunyan 142, 143
Colbert on the Dutch 143
Lincoln, Moses, Handel . . . 144, 145
The nail-carved pagoda 144
"The brave old oak" 146
The Koh-i-noor 146
Charles and Mary Lamb 147
ERROR.
Mistaken railway signal 21
ETHICAL CULTURE.
Differs from sanctification . . . 215
Failure of, without Christ . . . 360
ETHICS. (See BIBLE, ETHICS OF.)
EUCHARIST. (See also TRANSUBSTANTIATION.)
Benefit of the 46
EVANGELIZATION.
Philip and the Eunuch 265

EVOLUTION. PAGE
A mere hypothesis:
Darwin's statement 267
Darwin on Origin of Man . . . 323
Carlyle on Origin of Darwin . . 324
Origin of mind, conscience, will 324
EXPERIENCE, LEARNING BY.
Elisha's young man 72
John Brown of Haddington . . 72

FAITH. (See also CONFIDENCE and CREED.)
Practical demonstration of:
Philip and Nathanael 9
In God:
Saying of Duke of Alba 55
Strengthening of one's:
Niagara Suspension Bridge . . 55
A life principle:
Gastric fluid 80
Acting on:
Jeremiah buys field at Anathoth 82
Method in:
Desk with 365 drawers 83
Its revelation:
Bible and experience 212
Justification by:
Accepted salvation 273
FAULTFINDING.
Mote in the eye 131
Momus's criticisms 131
Kavron the swine 133
FORCE. (See also ENERGY.)
Indefinability of 39
Victories of 70
FORGETFULNESS.
Japanese proverb 357
FRIENDLINESS OF THE CHURCH.
"Recognition of Saints on Earth" 163
FRIENDSHIP.
How to choose friends 163
Solomon on 162
Confidence an element in:
Alexander and his physicians. 163
Sympathy an element of:
Preacher and painter 164
Dangers in:
Disintegrating ivy 164
Mutuality of:
Wounded soldier 165
Classic symbol of 166

GAIN, PURSUIT OF.
View from Mt. Tom 29
Themistocles 31
GENTLENESS.
Examples of Christ's 184
GLEANING.
Gideon's reply to Ephraimites . 92
Present an age of 93
GOD.
Gifts of:
Equality of distribution of . 67

GOD—*Continued* PAGE
Providence of:
Ingersoll on 67
Grace of:
Solution of social inequality . 68
Christian shibboleth:
Story of Jephthah 210
Nature of:
One, triune, and incarnate . . 211
Our sonship to:
Tichborne claimant 257
Various doctrines of 268
The only reality:
Brahman doctrine of *maya* . . 330
Living for:
The three urns 356
GRACE.
Inscrutable operation of 41
Differs from *karma* 214
GREEK PHILOSOPHIES.
Stoic, Epicurean, Academic . . 234
GREEK RELIGION.
St. Paul on 232
Gods of Athens 232, 234
GRIEF.
David's bereavement 116
GROWTH.
Nature of 38

HABIT, STRENGTH OF.
Blacksmith's arm 177
HAPPINESS, DEFINITIONS OF.
Varro, Plato, Epicurus, Reno . 353
HASTE.
Examples of:
Politician and the speculator . 223
In spiritual growth:
Tourist and peasant 225
In Christian service:
Moody's converts 160
Boy and seeds 226
Judson 226
HEAVEN, RECOGNITION OF FRIENDS IN.
Bible's hopeful texts . . 111, 114, 116
Universality of belief in 111
Intellectual consensus favors . 112
Arguments from identity and memory 113
Sick child and rose-tree 114
Meeting of veterans 114
Compatability of human and Divine love 115
HERESY. (See also INFIDELITY and AGNOSTICISM.)
Past ages of:
Time of the apostles, middle ages, and close of the eighteenth century 94
HISTORY, HAND OF GOD IN.
Pharaoh, Herod, Philip of Spain 74
HOPE.
Motto of London Humane Society 85
HUMANITARIANISM. (See ALTRUISM.)

HUMANITY. (See MERCY.) PAGE

IGNORANCE. (See KNOWLEDGE.)
IMMORTALITY.
Evidence for:
Miracle of Lazarus 51, 53
Sign of Jonas 206
Christ's resurrection 206
Belief in:
By Greeks, Romans, Egyptians, Hindus, American Indians 111, 112
By poets 112
An intuition 112
Wordsworth on reaper's song. 196
Symbol of:
Real life of leaf 196
IMPOSSIBILITY.
Egyptian hieroglyph for 26
INACTION.
Drifting ship 56
INCONSISTENCY, CHRISTIAN.
Nathan's reproof of David . . . 191
Paul's rebuke of Romans . . . 191
INDEPENDENCE.
Crockett at White House . . . 168
INDIFFERENCE.
St. Paul's audience in Athens . 235
Of God:
Belief of the Epicureans in . 85
To God:
Carlyle on fools 66
Of the aged 110
Pursuit of wealth and pleasure 107
To anguish:
Morbid curiosity at a hanging. 109
Jesus on the cross 109
INDIVIDUALITY.
Keynote of present age 89
INDUSTRIAL REFORM, PRESENT AN AGE OF.
Industrial slavery in early Rome 95
Weavers' wages under Charles II 95
Burns' poem: "For a' that" . . 95
INFIDELITY. (See also AGNOSTICISM.)
At end of eighteenth century . 94
In Yale College 95, 266
Reign of Terror 265
Franklin's remark to Paine . . 266
Strategy now supplants open warfare 266
Resolution of French *Corps Legislatif* 295
Cause of German 319
INFLUENCE.
For evil:
Effects of infidel's lecture . . 192
"Napoleon's Welcome in Hell" 192
For good:
Dr. W. G. T. Shedd 192
"The Greeting" 192

INGRATITUDE. PAGE
Shimei to David 183
INSIGHT, SPIRITUAL.
Elisha's young man, Stephen, McCheyne 72, 73, 75
INSINCERITY. (See CREED WITHOUT BELIEF.)
INSTINCT, ANIMAL.
Jeremiah, Anacreon, Homer, Solomon, Professor Newton, Herr Palmen on 167, 168
INTERCESSION.
Queen Esther 154
Moses, Hezekiah, St. Paul, John Knox 155
Legend of Sandalphon 156
INTOLERANCE. (See BIGOTRY.)
INVENTION.
Walter Scott on gas lighting . . 88
Present age one of 93

JESUS. (See CHRIST.)
JOAN OF ARC.
History of 309, 310
Charged with witchcraft and forwardness 311, 312
JOY OF CHRISTIAN.
John Bradford's remark before martyrdom 108
JUDAS ISCARIOT.
Judas tree 297
Betrays Jesus 300
Remorse and death of 301
Wiertz's painting of 301

KARMA. (See CONSEQUENCES and GRACE.)
KNOWLEDGE, MAN'S LACK OF.
Socrates on 186

LABOR WHOSE RESULT IS UNSEEN.
Judson and Anworth 81
LAW, THE JEWISH.
Precepts of 233
LIBERTY NOT OPPOSED TO LAW.
St. James on law of liberty . . 58
French Revolution 58
Christ the type of free man . . 59
Captain Clark of the *Oregon* . . 60
LORD'S SUPPER. (See EUCHARIST.)

MAN.
And the other animals:
Hamilton and Parker on . . . 168
A wanderer from God:
Image in the water 169
His return to God:
By way of the cross 170
Bobolink 170
Broken-winged duck 171
Homesick for God:
St. Augustine's saying 169
Legend of Jesus and rabbis . . 169

MAN.—*Continued.* PAGE
Ascent of 323
Destiny of 325
History of his soul 325
Restoration of 326
MARTYRDOM.
Last words of John Bradford, Alice Driver, and Castilia . 108, 286
MAYA. (See GOD.)
MEDITATION.
Isaac 207
Good results of 209
MERCY OF GOD.
St. Peter on 84
Barabbas 86, 302
Woman taken in adultery . . . 86
Saul of Tarsus 86
Alexander's beacon 87
Jesus at the door 110
MERCY TO ANIMALS.
Moses on 238
Bentham and Parker on animals' rights 240
Thoreau's and Lincoln's 240
Wordsworth on 241
MILLENNIUM.
Golden Age before us 88
MIRACLES.
Loaves and fishes 25
Walking on water 25, 26
Growth 25, 89
Anecdote of Xerxes 27
MISSIONS.
Sir Rivers Thompson on 91
The open door to:
India, Japan, Africa, China . 180
Success of:
St. Patrick, St. Augustine, St. Boniface 181
Volunteers for:
Crusades, our Civil War . . . 181
Last century the age of:
Statistics 181, 183
Money for:
The mountain of silver 183
MISSIONARIES.
Compared to Cromwell's soldiers 320
Allan Gardiner, missionary to Tierra del Fuego 334

NEWSPAPER, THE SUNDAY.
The burglar's assistant 345
Unnecessary, unlawful, disreputable 345, 346
Statistics of sensationalism . . 346
Robs employees of rest 347
Invades Sabbath rest 348
Unfits for sanctuary 348
Enfeebles conscience 349
NEW YEAR.
Laban's invitation 353
NIRVANA. (See PANTHEISM.)

OBSERVATION, EFFECTS OF. PAGE
Galileo, Newton, Luther 119
OMNISCIENCE OF GOD.
Statue of Jupiter 84
OPPORTUNITY.
The Lost:
Felix 172
The sleeper at Paradise gate . 176
Wasted:
Army of the Potomac 330
ORTHODOXY.
Nature of 260
Legal definition of 261
Christ the life of Christian . . . 261
Bible the symbol of Christian . . 262
Administered by the Spirit . . . 264
Reverence for 264

PANTHEISM.
Brahman doctrine of *Nirvana* . 330
PATIENCE.
Lad shoveling coal 57
Isaiah and St. Peter on 222
Panacea for evil 222
Preparation for college 222
Christ's preparation 223
Burns on 223
PEACE.
Victories of 40
Christian in the chamber of . . 259
PERSONAL HABITS, REFORM IN.
Vices now disreputable 96
PESSIMISM.
Characteristic of the secular Christian 82
PHILOSOPHY, ANCIENT. (See also GREEK PHILOSOPHERS.)
Gibbon on failure of 366
PILATE.
A coward 303
History of 303, 304
Meets Jesus 304
Vision of his wife 305
A sychophant 307
Death of 307
PLAN, God's.
Fall of Jericho 55
POISE.
Negress's burden 77
POLITICAL REFORM.
Bribery under William III . . . 97
POPULARITY.
Carlyle on 162
"Wooden spoon" at Yale . . . 162
POWER.
God the source of:
Micah and St. Paul 327
God's, immeasurable and illimitable:
Power of the sun 327
Latency and waste of moral:
Waste of material power . . 328
Loss of, due to sin:
Samson 329

PAGE

PRACTICALITY.
Voltaire on La Harpe 160
PRAYER.
Power of:
Legend of St. Gudule 141
Wrestling Jacob 141
Answers to:
By Christ 156
Of Esther 157
Of American negroes 157
Old Janet and Satan 220
PREDESTINATION.
Does not interfere with free will 214
PREPARATION. (See also PATIENCE.)
Building of Solomon's temple . 38
PRESENT AGE.
Spirit of:
An age of reason, individuality, protest, humanity, spiritual dyamics, and truth 89, 90, 93
An age of toleration, orthodoxy, morality, industrial reform, and moral energy 94, 95, 96
PRESENT, IMPORTANCE OF THE.
Philosopher in the pit 209
PROGRESS.
In religion:
Story of Methuselah 161
Mummy of Rameses 245
In salvation 246
Tennyson as child and poet . . 247
Pillars of Hercules 248
In duty:
St. Paul's enlightenment . . . 248
Examples of 249
Alexander the Great 274
Of the world:
Since time of Cromwell . . . 317
PROPHECY.
Truth of, proved by:
Sign of Jonas 204
PROTEST AGAINST AUTHORITY.
Control of a ship 89
PROVIDENCE.
Its elements:
Predestination, Government, and Grace 214
Molinæus and the spider . . . 241
PURPOSE.
Thinking to some:
Howe and the sewing-machine 208
Fixity of:
St. Paul 16
Grecian athletes 16, 17
Christopher Wren 161
Vespasian's seal 208
Candle shot through plank . 333

PAGE

RATIONALISM.
Man lost on prairie 152
READINESS.
Paul before execution 77
REASON, THE PRESENT AGE OF.
Bancroft on Descartes 89
REFORM. (See also CIVIC, INDUSTRIAL, PERSONAL, POLITICAL, SOCIAL, TEMPERANCE REFORM.)
Opposition to:
Hostility to Nehemiah, to Anthony Comstock, to Salvation Army, to Missions, 123, 124, 125
REGENERATION AN INWARD CHANGE.
Nicodemus 215
RELIGION.
Lack of:
Ahab 8
Formal:
Of Pharisees and ritualists 198, 199
Tyndall on 199
Of rhapsody:
Renan 200
Sacrilegious plays 200
Of philosophy:
Grandiloquence 200
Of self-culture:
Dr. Abernethy's cure 201
REMORSE.
Gough's, for early sins 120
Lady Macbeth's 121
King Charles after St. Bartholemew's 135
Nero's, for murder of his mother 139
Richard the Third's 139
Byron on 139
Of Emperor Constance 253
Of Judas Iscariot 301
Of Pilate 307
Of Samson 333
RENUNCIATION.
Scheffer's picture of the Temptation 31
REPENTANCE.
Prodigal Son 14
Valley of Bochim 22
"The Return" 153
Does not alone remove sin:
Dr. Samuel Johnson 60
Staupitz to Luther 302
Fervor of:
Dr. Gurnall on 314
David on 314
REPROOF, OPEN.
Paul to Peter 133
RESCUE.
Kissing a convict 36
RESULTS, GREAT, FROM SMALL BEGINNINGS.
Woman of Samaria 31

RESULTS—*Continued* PAGE
Philip and the Eunuch 81
RESOLUTION.
Spiked sandals 356
RESURRECTION.
Lazarus 52
Child of the widow of Nain . . . 117
St. John, Job, David, Ezekiel on 230
Quaker's dream of his death . . 253
RETRIBUTION.
Certainty of:
Mills of God 87
Solomon on 118
"Sowing one's wild oats" . . . 118
The king's escort 121
Adoni-bezek 135
RETROSPECT.
Returned Scotchman 358
REVELATION.
Blind boy Copane 231
RIGHTEOUSNESS.
Man without a wedding garment 109
Three elements of:
Regeneration, sanctification, and imputation 215

SABBATH. (See also NEWSPAPER, SUNDAY.)
Desecration:
Isaiah on 217
Present 217
Rests on Divine authority:
Christ did not abrogate it . . 217
Rabbinical rules for 217
Rest on, necessary to health:
Opinion of Dr. Haegler . . . 218
Based on our sonship to God:
James II. and the royal seal . 218
Necessary to spiritual life:
Analogy to physical life . . . 219
Observance of:
Rest from unnecessary work. 219
Works of mercy 219
Refraining from worldly pleasures 219
SALOON.
Enemy of man, home, State, and Church 338
Witnesses against 339
Victims of 339
Chief Justice Coleridge on . . . 340
Shakespeare on drink 341
Church's relation to 343
SALVATION.
Way to:
Rome 21
Bunyan's pilgrims 24
Anecdote of Covenanters . . . 28
Losing one's life 29
Chinese potter 30
Prisoner's chain at Treviso . . . 125
Blind Bartimeus 147

SALVATION—*Continued.* PAGE
Business made a bar to:
Busy father 174
Æsop's simpleton 174
Felix 175
In time of need:
Hebrew children, Jacob, Elijah 187
In the arms of death:
Lad brought home 188
From fear of the judgment:
Jesus our substitute and advocate 188
A renewal of life:
Healing of the blind 251
Spiritual deafness 252
Thirsting deer 252
Prodigal's resolve 253
Acceptance necessary to:
Lost Alpine tourists 278
SANCTIFICATION.
Is ingrained:
Differs from ethical culture . 215
SCIENCE, ITS FIELD THE VISIBLE.
Student and air-gun 212
SELF.
Indulgence of:
Alexander the Great 6
Must be eliminated from moral judgments:
Athenian sculptor 65
Surrender of, to God:
The Brahman doctrine of *Apavarga* 129
Salvation of:
Captain of the *Algona*.
Sacrifice of:
Rizpah 156
Living for:
The visiting church-goer . . . 355
SENSUALITY.
Greek temple of pleasure 298
SERVICE, SAVED FOR.
Lazarus 53
SIGNS.
Uselessness of:
Hindoo conjurer 203
Already existing:
In the Bible 204
Sign of Prophet Jonas 204
SILENCE.
In nature 40
SIN.
Perversion of moral sense by:
The Compass 10
Perversion of will by:
Story of Israel Putnam 11
Snares of:
Jericho Road 33
Statue of Liberty 33
Bondage of:
Lazarus 50
A fortress to be stormed:
Jericho 54

SIN—*Continued.* PAGE
Revelry of:
Laugh of the harlot 107
Burning asylum 108
Secret:
Discovery of an ancient theft . 108
Knowledge of, essential to guilt:
Tichborne claimant 115
No remission of, by contrition alone:
Lady Macbeth 121
Conquest over:
Pompey's triumph 148
Terrors of:
Cornwall miners 175
Dangers of:
Yacht and the iceberg 176
Conviction of:
David 186
Thief on the cross 186
No sins are small 239
Is death and deflement:
Corpse on the ice-floe 251
Inevitableness of:
Swiss glacier 276
Character of
Universal, distributive, all-pervasive, inevitable 276
SINCERITY.
Disciples refused by Christ . . . 199
SOCIAL REFORM.
Christ the center of 90
Lack of charitable institutions among ancients 96
Nehemiah's rebuilding the temple 122
Anti-vice crusade 124
SOCIOLOGY. (See ALTRUISM.)
SOLITUDE, DETERIORATING EFFECT OF.
Wordsworth at Rydal Mount . 168
SOPHISTRY. (See CASUISTRY.)
SPIRIT, THE HOLY.
Character of 256
John Wesley on 256
Key to the Bible:
Captain and his charts . . . 264
STANDARDS OF MEASUREMENT.
St. Paul on 62
Pagan, Modern, Platonic, Christian, Fashionable 62, 63, 64
STUMBLING-BLOCKS.
Christ's saying 196
Cranmer at the stake 190
SUCCESS THROUGH DIFFICULTIES. (See ENVIRONMENT.)
SUNDAY. (See SABBATH.)
SUPERSTITION.
Guiteau 152

TACT, LACK OF.
The catechized professor . . . 181
TALEBEARING.
Meanness of gossip 139
TEMPERANCE REFORM. PAGE
Dram-shops of Manhattan . . . 70
First temperance society . . . 95
Liquor bottles exempted from duty 95
Per capita consumption of liquor 337
TEMPTATION, FACING.
David and Goliath 187
THOUGHTLESSNESS.
McCheyne on 207
Disastrous results of 207
THOUGHTS.
Governing one's:
A Scotchman's saying 208
Elevated:
On sin, death, and the cross . 209
TIME, FLIGHT OF.
The Phenician and his ships . . 195
TOLERATION, THE PRESENT AN AGE OF.
Persecution of Galileo 94
Opening of first Congress with prayer 94
TRANSUBSTANTIATION.
Poison in the wafer 46
TRIFLES.
War over a bucket 240

UNITY, CHRISTIAN.
Trial of General Bazaine . . . 182

WASHINGTON, GEORGE.
Love for his mother 291
Modesty, valor, integrity . . 291, 295
Belief in God, Christ, the Bible, the Sabbath 292, 293, 294
Church-membership 293
Prayer at Valley Forge 295
WISDOM.
Dr. Johnson on importance of all knowledge 227
Definition of 227
Spiritual, is intuitive:
Compared with instinct . . . 228
Not attained by science . . . 231
Spiritual, is progressive:
Mouse and cheese-box 229
Three steps toward:
Credulity, doubt, and belief, 229, 230
WOMANLINESS, EXAMPLES OF:
Joan of Arc, mother of Benjamin West, Vashti, Esther . . 312
WOMEN IN THE CHURCH.
Kapiolani 313
WONDERS, SEVEN.
Ancient world 106
Modern world 106
WORK. (See ACTION.)
WORLD, A BROADER CONCEPTION OF THE.
Hesiod's saying 74

WORRIES OF LIFE. PAGE
David's experience with bees . . 73
WORRY.
Besetting sin of Americans . . . 76
Thackeray's saying 76
Reasons for 78, 82

YOUTH.
Sins of:
Girls and fast companions . . 118

YOUTH.—*Continued.* PAGE
"Boys will be boys" 118
Timothy's good example . . . 119
Harper, James, Words of his mother to 120
Gough's remorse for early sins 120
Burns' epitaph 121
The time for achievement:
John De Medici, Grotius, Lafayette, Newton, Calvin, Marconi, Napoleon, Christ . 120

3-
HS











OCT 2 3 1941

